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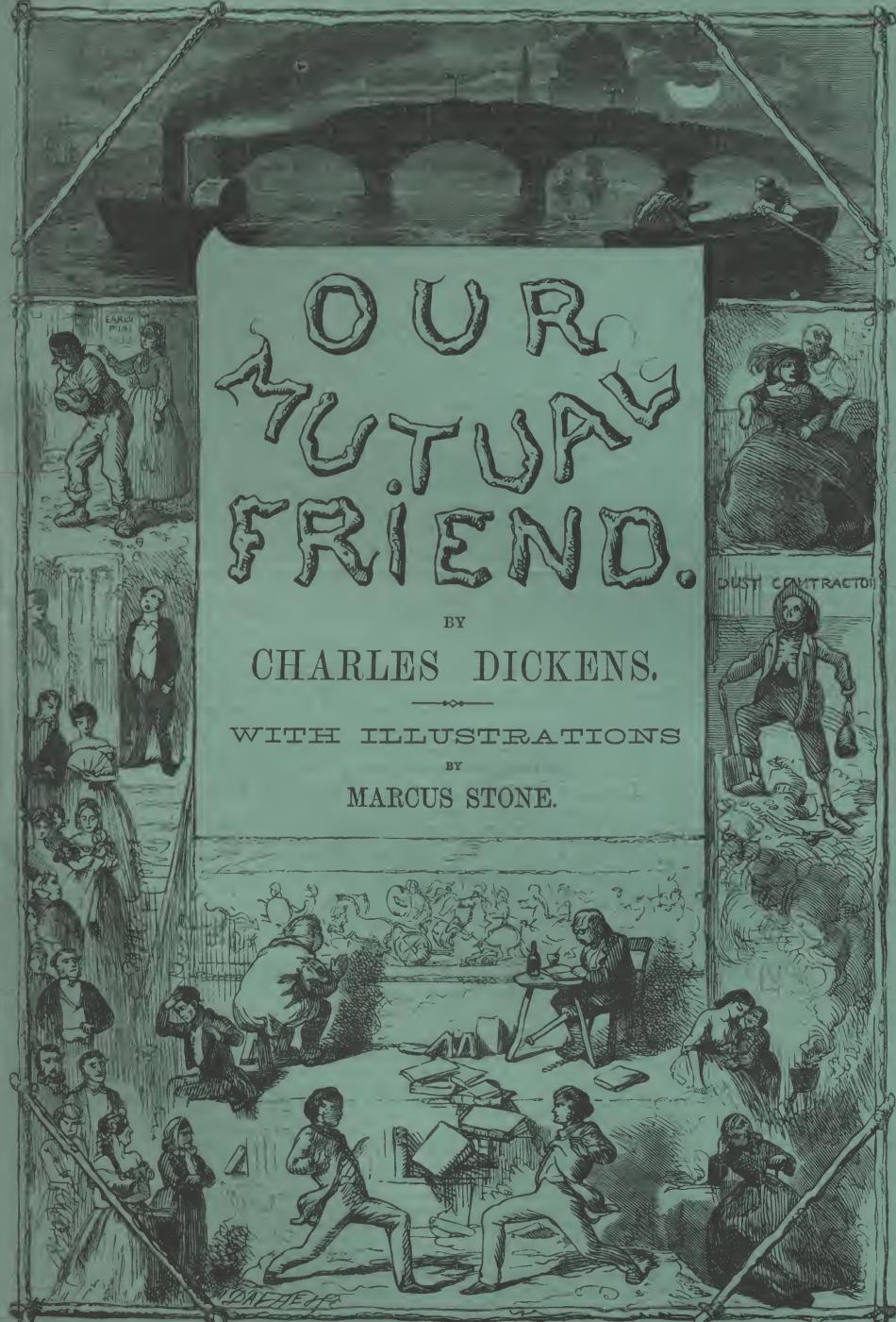
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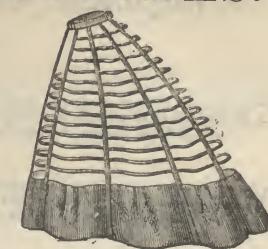
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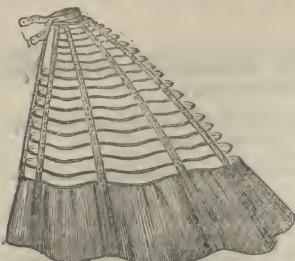
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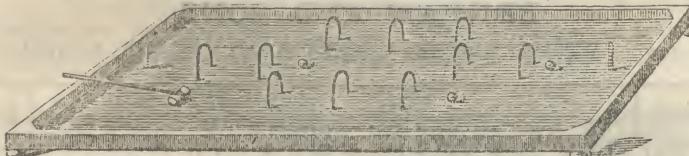
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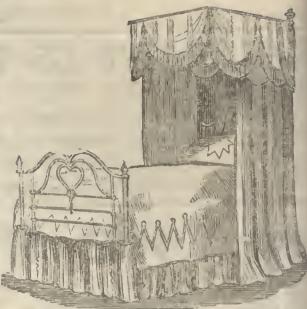
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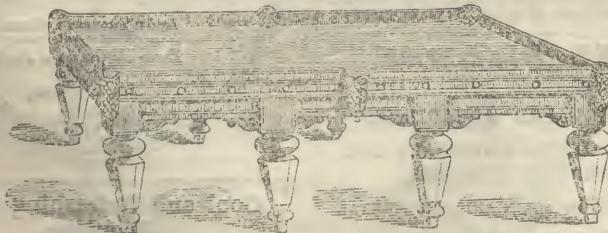
THURSTON AND CO.,

Billiard Table Manufacturers

TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN,

BY APPOINTMENT,

And to H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES.



The great superiority of the Billiard Tables manufactured by this Firm is fully attested by the fact of their Tables having been patronized by Royalty since the reign of George III., during which period they have been honoured also by the patronage of the principal Nobility and Gentry of England, upwards of two hundred of Her Majesty's and the Native Regiments at home and abroad, and more than one hundred of the principal London, Provincial, and Foreign Clubs.

CATHERINE STREET, STRAND, LONDON.



Used in the Palaces of

THE QUEEN

and the

PRINCE OF WALES

More cleanly, polishes more quickly, & cheaper, Because it is less wasteful, and because a little goes further than any other kind. Sold by Grocers, Druggists, Ironmongers, &c. RECKITT and Sons, Suffolk Lane, Upper Thames Street, E.C., and Hull.

SHEPPARD'S NEW MODEL DAIRY BUTTER

In One Pound Baskets, *really delicious*, 1s. 4*1/2*d., basket included. The Largest Stock of Dairy Provisions in London. 'Stilton Cheese All the Year Round.' Devonshire Clotted Cream fresh daily.

Warehouses, 88 Borough,

AND
The Terminus Stores, London Bridge, S.E.

White and Sound Teeth.
JEWSBURY and BROWN'S ORIENTAL TOOTH PASTE. Established by 40 years' experience as the best preservative for the teeth and gums. The original and only Genuine, 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. per pot.

113, MARKET STREET, MANCHESTER; and by Agents throughout the Kingdom and Colonies.

SPANISH FLY is the acting ingredient in ALEX. ROSS'S CANTHARIDES OIL, which speedily produces whiskers and thickens hair. 3s. 6d.; by post, 54 stamps. Microscopic examination free.—Alex. Ross, 248, High Holborn, London.

HAIR DYE.—248, High Holborn, London.—ALEX. ROSS'S LIQUID DYE is the best in the world, producing either light or dark colours. 2s. 6d., 5s. 6d., and 10s. 6d., or per post for 54, 84, and 144 stamps.

DYSPEPSIA.

MORSON'S PEPSINE WINE is a perfectly palatable form for administering this popular remedy for weak digestion. Manufactured by T. Monson and Son, 19 and 46, Southampton Row, Russell Square, W.C., in bottles at 3s., 5s., and 10s. each. Pepsine Lozenges, in boxes, at 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d. each.

GLASS SHADES

For the Protection of Articles injured by exposure,

FERN CASES AND AQUARIUMS,

GLASS AND OTHER MATERIALS FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC PURPOSES,

AND EVERY KIND OF PLAIN AND ORNAMENTAL

WINDOW-GLASS,

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL, AT

CLAUDET & HOUGHTON'S,
89, HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON.

Lists of Prices sent Free on Application.

THE PERFECT HAIR-DYE.

UNWIN AND ALBERT'S COLUMBIAN.—Its extraordinary power is so effective and instantaneous that grey hair is coloured permanently a natural brown or black the moment it is touched by the dye, leaving it perfectly clean and soft, as before the application. In cases at 5s. 6d., 10s. 6d., and 21s. Sample Case, 2s. 6d.; by post 40 stamps. 24 PICCADILLY, where Specimens may be seen.



Beware of Imitations.

AURICOMUS FLUID, for producing the rich golden flaxen colour so greatly admired for its beautiful and becoming shade, on ladies' and children's hair. Prepared only by UNWIN and ALBERT. Court Hairdressers, 24 Piccadilly. In bottles, 10s. 6d. and 21s.

Bond's Permanent Marking Ink.
THE ORIGINAL INVENTION, established 1821, is by far the **BEST** for Marking NAMES and INITIALS upon household linen, wearing apparel, &c. Price 1s. per bottle. No sixpenny size ever made. Sold by E. R. BOND, 10, Bishopsgate St. Within, E.C., and by all respectable chemists and stationers in the United Kingdom.—NOTICE. Removed from 28, Long Lane, E.C. (where it has been established nearly half a century), to 10, Bishopsgate Street Within, E.C.

OSBORNE'S ANALYSED PROVISIONS.

A saving of 15 per cent.
To the purchaser on these truly excellent food products.

OSBORNE HOUSE,
30 LUDGATE HILL, NEAR ST. PAUL'S.



Cool and Refreshing Toilet Requisite.

OLDRIDGE'S BALM OF COLUMBIA, established upwards of forty years, is the best and only certain remedy ever discovered for Preserving, Strengthening, Beautifying, or Restoring the Hair, Whiskers, or Moustaches, and preventing them turning grey. Sold in bottles, 3s. 6d., 6s., and 11s., by C. and A. OLDRIDGE, 22, Wellington Street, Strand, London, W.C., and all Chemists and Perfumers. For Children's and Ladies' Hair it is most efficacious and unrivalled.

SCOTT ADIE,

By Special Appointment to Her Majesty and H.R.H. the Princess of Wales,

Has on View the largest Choice of

LADIES' WATERPROOF CLOAKS AND JACKETS
In the most Fashionable and Useful Shapes, suited for the Season.

**LADIES' SUMMER AND WINTER LINSEY WOOLSEY
DRESSES AND PETTICOATS,
SCOTCH SPUN SILKS, IRISH POPLINS, &c.**

BOYS' KILT SUITS

In all the Clans, made to Order.

SCOTT ADIE'S FAMOUS WATERPROOF HIGHLAND CLOAKS

For Gentlemen, of SCOTCH TWEEDS, in various Textures, suited for all Seasons and Climates.

HAND-LOOM TWEEDS of real HIGHLAND WOOLS

For Shooting, Fishing, and General Country wear.

BANNOCKBURN MAUDS in the Heathers, Granites, Stone, Lovat, and other Mixtures,
Sufficient in each for Suits, at 28s. 6d. each.

HOME-SPUN SHEPHERD'S PLAIDS, 21s. each.

BLACK and OXFORD SCOTCH TWEEDS in all substances for Clergymen's wear.

SCOTT ADIE, 115 AND 115A REGENT STREET.

ENTRANCE, CORNER OF VIGO STREET, LONDON, W.

FIRST MANUFACTURED IN LONDON,
A.D. 1742.



By Appointment to T.R.H. the Prince and Princess of Wales.

SANGSTERS' UMBRELLAS,
ON FOX'S PATENT PARAGON FRAMES.



W. and J. S. have been awarded **Four Prize Medals** for the quality of their Silk and Alpaca Umbrellas, upwards of **THREE MILLIONS** of ALPACA having been made under their Patent.

A Label, of the annexed pattern, with the words "**SANGSTERS, MAKERS,**" is attached to all Umbrellas of their Manufacture.

140, Regent Street,
94, Fleet Street,

10, Royal Exchange,
75, Cheapside.

Shippers to China, India, and other tropical climates, furnished with Lists of Prices of the new Nagasaki Umbrellas (invented by W. & J. S.) on application at their Wholesale Warehouse, 75, Cheapside.

N.B.—OBSERVE THE NAME.

"RECONNOITERER" GLASS 9/6!!!

Prepaid to any address, 10s. 10d. Weighs only 8 ounces. Shows distinctly Jupiter's Moons, windows and doors of small houses 10 miles off, &c. &c. This "Tourist's Favourite" is valuable for Landscape at 30 miles!! The extraordinary excellence and cheapness are due to enormous sales, refined division of labour, steam power, and very small profits.

"The Reconnoiterer is very good." The Marquis of CARMARTHEN.—"A most useful glass." Lord GIFFORD of Ampney.—"It is remarkably good." Lord GARVAGH.—"It gives me complete satisfaction, and is wonderfully good." Sir DIGBY CAYLEY, of Brompton, York.—"I never before met an article that so completely answered the recommendation of its maker, nor, although I have tried many, a glass combining so much power for its size with so much clearness." F. H. FAWKES of Farnley, Esq.—"Quite as powerful as that for which I gave £5 5s." Major STARKEY, Wrenbury Hall, Nantwich.—"I have found it effective on the 1000 yards range." Capt. SEIDEN, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield.—"We have carefully tried it at an 800 yard rifle-range against all the glasses possessed by the members of the corps, and found it *fully* equal to others which cost more than four times its price." Field.—"What intending tourist will now start without such an indispensable companion to a pleasure trip?" *Notes and Queries.*

The HYTHE GLASS shows bullet marks at 1200 yards, and men at 3½ miles, price 31s. 6d.

The above Glasses are *only* to be had *direct* from SALOM and CO., 98 Princes Street, Edinburgh, who have positively *No Agents* anywhere.

MAKERS TO THE QUEEN AND PRINCE OF WALES.

FRY'S

HOMOEOPATHIC
PEARL
ICELAND MOSS
ROCK

COCOA.

FRY'S SOLUBLE CHOCOLATE.

Fry's Chocolate for Eating, in Sticks, Drops, &c. Fry's Chocolate Creams.

J. S. FRY & SONS are the ONLY English House in the trade to whom a PRIZE MEDAL was awarded at the International Exhibition, 1862. The superior quality of their articles has been attested by uniform public approbation DURING A CENTURY.

FOR CHILDREN'S DIET.

BROWN & POLSONS



**GUARANTEED
PERFECTLY PURE.**

**CORRECTED RECIPE FOR
INFANTS' FOOD.**

**PATENT
CORN FLOUR.**

To two teaspoonsful of BROWN AND POLSON'S CORN FLOUR, mixed with two tablespoonsful of cold water, add half-pint of boiling milk and water (equal quantities); boil for seven minutes, and sweeten very slightly. It should be when warm about the thickness of cream.

BRYANT AND MAY,

FAIRFIELD WORKS, LONDON, E.C.,

DEG TO CALL ATTENTION TO THEIR

HOLDER AND TABLET,

for their Non-Poisonous Patent Safety Matches, which light only on the box—for use in Nurseries, Bedrooms, Offices, Kitchens, Halls, Warehouses, Stables, &c. &c.

May be obtained of anyone supplying the Patent Safety Matches.—Are neat and inexpensive.

SLACK'S

ELECTRO-PLATE

IS a coating of Pure Silver over Nickel. A combination of two Metals possessing such valuable properties renders it in appearance and wear equal to Sterling Silver.

MANUFACTURED SOLELY BY R. AND J. SLACK.

Cruet Frames, from 1s.; Corner Dishes, 2*l.* 8*s.* set, forming Eight Dishes; Tea and Coffee Sets from 4*l.* 10*s.*

King's

Electro Plated Strong Plated Thread or Thread, Fiddle Pattern Fiddle Pattern. Pattern. with Shell.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.			
Table Forks, per dozen	1	10	0	...	1	18	0	...	2	8	0	...	3	0	0
Dessert Forks	1	0	0	...	1	10	0	...	1	15	0	...	2	2	0
Table Spoons	1	10	0	...	1	18	0	...	2	8	0	...	3	0	0
Dessert Spoons	1	0	0	...	1	10	0	...	1	15	0	...	2	2	0
Tea Spoons	0	12	0	...	0	18	0	...	1	3	6	...	1	10	0

EVERY ARTICLE FOR THE TABLE AS IN SILVER.

OLD GOODS REPLATED EQUAL TO NEW.

SLACK'S TABLE CUTLERY

Has been celebrated 50 years for quality and cheapness.

Their Catalogue of Drawings and Prices may be had gratis, or sent Post-free. Orders above 2*l.* sent carriage free, per rail, and packed without charge.

RICHARD AND JOHN SLACK,

IRONMONGERS TO HER MAJESTY,

336 STRAND, opposite SOMERSET HOUSE.

Cash's Cambric Frilling

Requires neither hemming nor whipping, and is of a fine and peculiarly durable material, perfectly free from all dress. It is of various widths. For trimming all kinds of LADIES' and CHILDREN'S WASHING APPAREL.

Sold by all Drapers, in Envelopes containing 12 yards, and bearing the names of J. & J. CASH, Patentees.

This Frilling is not attached to any band, and can be sewn on with great neatness.





WARNER'S KOHINOOR LAMPS,

TO BURN HYDRO-CARBON OILS.

From 18s. 6d. to £3. 3s.

—
Fitted with Superior Burners.

Free from Smoke and Smell.

Easily Trimmed, and of superior Workman-
ship.

Pillar Lamps of Novel Construction.

Vase Lamps, Richly Decorated, in great
variety.

Suitable as Elegant Flower Vases when the
Lamp is not in use.

Bronze Vase Lamps.

Lamps for the Work-Table, Reading-Desk,
and Study.

Bracket Lamps and Hanging Lamps for
Halls, Passages, and Staircases.

—
Complete Illustrated Catalogues may be seen, and the
Lamps obtained, of every respectable Lamp-dealer.

—
Those only are genuine with the Kohinoor Stamp on them.

RIMMEL'S CHOICE PERFUMERY, AND ELEGANT NOVELTIES.

THE STELLA COLAS BOUQUET,
With Portrait and Autograph of that Talented
Artiste.

THE LILY OF THE VALE.
MAY BLOSSOMS.

Price 2s. 6d. each, or the three in an elegant box, 7s. 6d.

RIMMEL'S EXTRACT OF LIME
JUICE AND GLYCERINE.

For imparting to the Hair a beautiful gloss and
softness. Price 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d., and 5s.

RIMMEL'S PERFUME FOUNTAIN.
An elegant adjunct to the Drawing-room, Ball-room,
Dinner Table, &c. Price from £1 10s.
Lent on Hire for Bazaars and Parties.

EUGENE RIMMEL,
Perfumer by Appointment to H.R.H. the Princess of
WALES,

96, STRAND, AND 24, CORNHILL, LONDON ;
AND 17, BOULEVARD DES ITALIENS, PARIS.

THE GERMAN TONIC.

'Melissus Essenz,' invented by Dr. Lang, of Munich, is
valuable for Indigestion, Nausea, Diarrhoea, Rheumatism,
or Lumbargia. To be had of Wholesale Medicine
Vendors, and all respectable Chemists, &c., throughout
the Country, in Bottles at 2s. 9d. each. Full directions
for use on wrappers enclosing the Bottles.

CHILDHOOD HATH ITS WOES :—

Falls and Bruises form no inconsiderable item in them.
Dr. Mathias Lang's Essential Spirit of Melissus quickly
removes any pain caused thereby, and prevents discolouration,
&c. To be obtained of all respectable Chemists, &c.,
throughout the Country, in Bottles at 2s. 9d. each. Full
directions for use on wrappers enclosing the Bottles.

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BEDDING, carriage free.—See our illustrated cata-
logue, containing prices and estimates for furnishing
houses of different classes, forwarded gratis. This book
is the most useful guide ever published; contains 400
designs of furniture drawn from an extensive stock, and
embraces every article necessary in furnishing. The
prices are based upon the lowest possible scale, and cannot
be equalled for cheapness and quality combined. The
stock always in hand at this extensive establishment is
one of the largest in the kingdom. References to former
customers are offered.—LEWIN CRAWFORD and Co., cabinet-
makers, upholsterers, and bedding manufacturers, 73 and
75, Brompton Road, Knightsbridge. N.B. Fifty drawing-
room suites in various styles, from 12 to 100 guineas. An
assortment of old oak furniture. Established 1810.

COOPER'S ANTISEPTIC CARNATION TOOTH PASTE,

Possesses, in an extraordinary degree, the power of Cleansing, Polishing, and Whitening the Teeth, let them be ever so discoloured by sickness or neglect, leaving upon them a pleasing smoothness.

In Pots, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each.



ANIMAL OIL POMADE

FOR THE HAIR,

Does not dry, as is the case with Pomade made with Vegetable Oils. In Stoppered Bottles, 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. each.



PERSIAN PERFUME

FOR THE HANDKERCHIEF,

Particularly recommended for its Fragrance and Durability.

In Bottles, 2s., 3s. 6d., 5s. 9d., and 7s. 6d.

W. T. COOPER, 26 OXFORD STREET, W.

* * * West End Agent for Rowlands' Macassar, Kalydor, and Odonto.

NO MORE PILLS OR ANY OTHER MEDICINE.

PERFECT digestion, strong nerves, sound lungs, healthy liver, refreshing sleep, functional regularity, and energy, restored to the most disordered or enfeebled—removing speedily and effectually indigestion (dyspepsia), cough, asthma, consumption, habitual constipation, diarrhoea, all gastric derangements, hemorrhoids, liver complaints, flatulency, nervousness, biliousness, fevers, sore throats, diphtheria, catarrhs, colds, influenza, noises in the head and ears, rheumatism, gout, impurities, eruptions, hysteria, neuralgia, irritability, sleeplessness, acidity, palpitation, heartburn, rheumatism, debility, dropsy, cramps, spasms, nausea and sickness even in pregnancy or at sea, sinking fits, bronchitis, scrofula, tightness of the chest, pains at the pit of the stomach and between the shoulders, &c.—by

DU BARRY'S DELICIOUS HEALTH-RESTORING REVALENTA ARABICA FOOD.

Extract from 60,000 Cures.—Cure No. 58,216, of the Marchioness de Brehan, Paris, of a fearful liver complaint, wasting away, with a nervous palpitation all over, bad digestion, constant sleeplessness, low spirits, and the most intolerable nervous agitation, which prevented even her sitting down for hours together, and which for seven years had resisted the careful treatment of the best French and English medical men. Cure No. 1771: Lord Stuart de Decies, Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Waterford, of many years' dyspepsia. Cure No. 49,842: 'Fifty years' indescribable agony from dyspepsia, nervousness, asthma, cough, constipation, flatulency, spasms, sickness, and vomiting.—Maria Joly.' Cure No. 47,121: Miss Elizabeth Jacobs, Nazing Vicarage, Waltham Cross, Herts, of extreme nervousness, indigestion, gatherings, low spirits, and nervous fancies. Cure No. 54,816: The Rev. James T. Campbell, Fakenham, Norfolk, of indigestion and torpidity of the liver, which had resisted all medical treatment. Cure No. 54,812: Miss Virginia Zeguers, of consumption. In Tins, 1 lb., 2s. 9d.; 2 lb., 4s. 6d.; 12 lb., 22s.

Barry Du Barry & Co., 77, Regent Street, London; and 26, Place Vendôme, Paris; 12, Rue de l'Empereur, Brussels; and 2, Via Oporto, Turin.

WILLIAM S. BURTON,

GENERAL FURNISHING IRONMONGER,

By Appointment, to H.R.H. the PRINCE of WALES.

THE PERFECT SUBSTITUTE FOR SILVER.

THE REAL NICKEL SILVER,

Introduced more than thirty years ago by

WILLIAM S. BURTON,

When PLATED by the patent process of Messrs. Elkington and Co., is beyond all comparison the very best article next to sterling silver that can be employed as such, either usefully or ornamentally, as by no possible test can it be distinguished from real silver.

A small useful set, guaranteed of first quality for finish and durability, as follows:—

	Fiddle or Old Silver Pattern.	Bead Pattern.	Thread or Bruns-wick Pattern.	King's, or Lily, &c.	£ s. d.				
12 Table Forks	1 13 0	2 0 0	2 4 0	0 2 10 0					
12 Table Spoons	1 13 0	2 0 0	2 4 0	0 2 10 0					
12 Dessert Forks	1 4 0	1 10 0	0 1 12 0	0 1 15 0					
12 Dessert Spoons	1 4 0	1 10 0	0 1 12 0	0 1 15 0					
12 Tea Spoons	16 0	1 0 0	1 2 0	1 5 0					
6 Egg Spoons, { gilt bowls	10 0	12 0	12 0	13 6					
2 Sauce Ladies	6 0	8 0	8 0	9 0					
1 Gravy Spoon	6 6	9 0	10 0	11 0					
2 Salt Spoons, { gilt bowls	3 4	4 0	4 0	4 6					
1 Mustard Spoon, { gilt bowl	1 8	2 0	2 0	2 3					
1 Pair Sugar Tongs	2 6	3 6	3 6	4 0					
1 Pair Fish Carvers	1 4 0	1 10 0	0 1 10 0	0 1 10 0					
1 Butter Knife	2 6	4 0	5 6	6 0					
1 Soup Ladle	10 0	12 0	16 0	17 0					
1 Sugar Sifter	3 3	4 6	4 6	5 0					
Total	9 19	9 12	9 0 13	9 6 14 17 3					

Any article to be had singly at the same prices. An oak chest to contain the above, and a relative number of knives, &c., £2 15s. Tea and Coffee Sets, Dish Covers, and Corner Dishes, Cruet and Liqueur Frames, &c., at proportionate prices. All kinds of re-plating done by the patent process.

CUTLERY WARRANTED.

The most varied Assortment of TABLE CUTLERY in the World, all warranted, is on sale at

WILLIAM S. BURTON'S,

At prices that are remunerative only because of the largeness of the sales.

	Table Knives per doz.	Dessert Knives per doz.	Carvers per patr.
IVORY HANDLES.			
3½-inch ivory handles	12 0	9 6	4 6
3½-inch fine ivory handles . . .	15 0	11 6	4 6
4-inch ivory balance handles . . .	18 0	14 0	5 0
4-inch fine ivory handles . . .	24 0	17 0	7 3
4-inch finest African ivory handles	32 0	26 0	11 0
Ditto, with silver ferrules	40 0	33 0	12 0
Ditto, carved handles, silver & ferrules	50 0	43 0	17 6
Nickel electro-silver handles, any pattern	25 0	19 0	17 6
Silver handles of any pattern	84 0	54 0	21 0
BONE AND HORN HANDLES.			
Knives and Forks per dozen.			
White bone handles	11 0	8 6	2 0
Ditto, balance handles	21 0	17 0	4 6
Black horn, rim'd shoulders	17 0	14 0	4 0
Do., very strong riveted hds. . . .	12 0	9 0	3 0

The Largest Stock in existence of PLATED DESSERT KNIVES and FORKS, in Cases and otherwise, and of the new Plated Fish Carvers.

FENDERS, STOVES, FIRE-IRONS,

and CHIMNEY-PIECES.—Buyers of the above are requested, before finally deciding, to visit WILLIAM S. BURTON'S SHOW ROOMS. They contain such an assortment of fenders, stoves, ranges, chimney-pieces, fire-irons, and general ironmongery as cannot be approached elsewhere, either for variety, novelty, beauty of design, or exquiteness of workmanship. Bright stoves, with ormolu ornaments, £3 15s. to £33 10s.; bronze fenders, with standards, 7s. to £5 12s.; steel fenders, £3 2s. to £11; ditto, with rich ormolu ornaments, from £2 2s. to £18; chimney-pieces, from £1 8s. to £100; fire-irons, from 2s. 3d. the set to £4 4s. The BURTON and all other PATENT STOVES, with radiating hearth-plates.

WILLIAM S. BURTON,

GENERAL FURNISHING IRONMONGER

By Appointment to H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES,

Sends a **CATALOGUE** gratis and post paid. It contains upwards of 600 Illustrations of his illimitable Stock of Sterling Silver and Electro Plate, Nickel Silver, and Britannia Metal Goods, Dish Covers, Hot-water Dishes, Stoves, Fenders, Marble Chimney-pieces, Kitchen Ranges, Lamps, Gasoliers, Tea Trays, Urns and Kettles, Clocks, Table Cutlery, Baths, Toilet Ware, Turnery, Iron and Brass Bedsteads, Bedding, Bedroom Cabinet Furniture, &c., with Lists of Prices, and PLANS of the TWENTY LARGE SHOW-ROOMS at

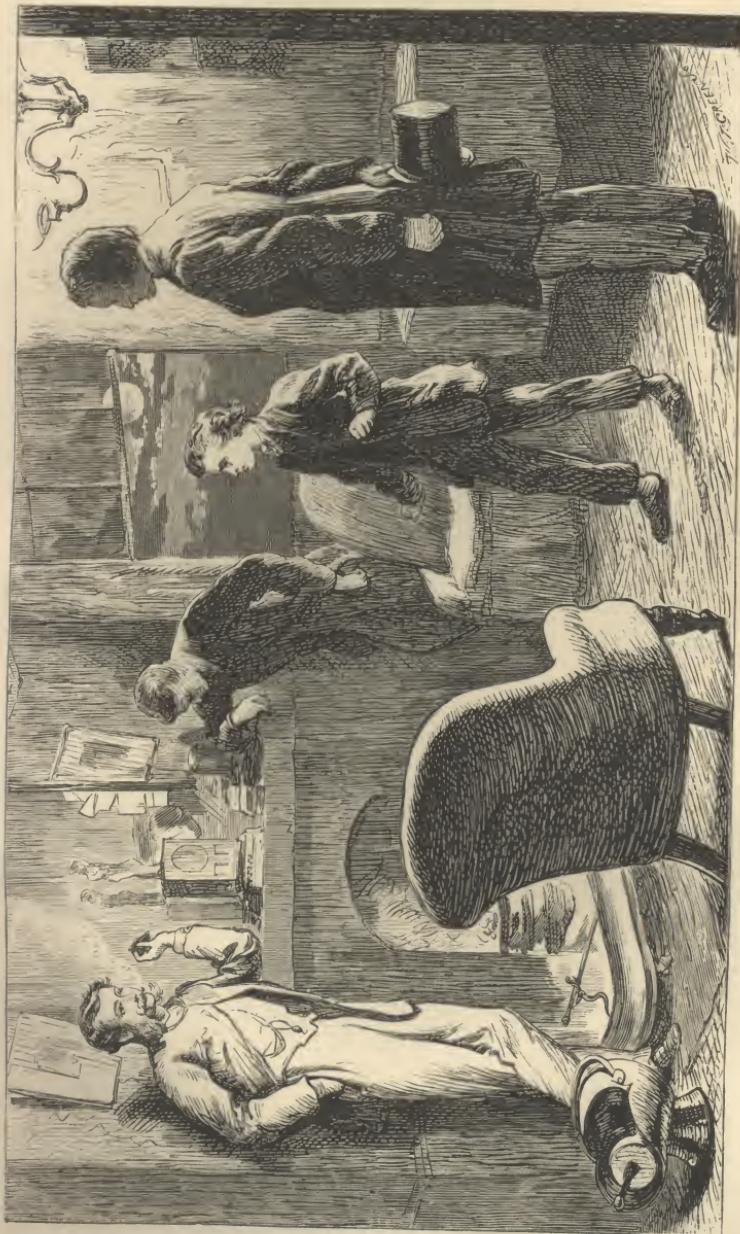
39 OXFORD STREET, W.; 1, 1a, 2, 3, & 4, NEWMAN STREET;
4, 5, & 6, PERRY'S PLACE; & 1 NEWMAN YARD, LONDON.

ESTABLISHED 1820.

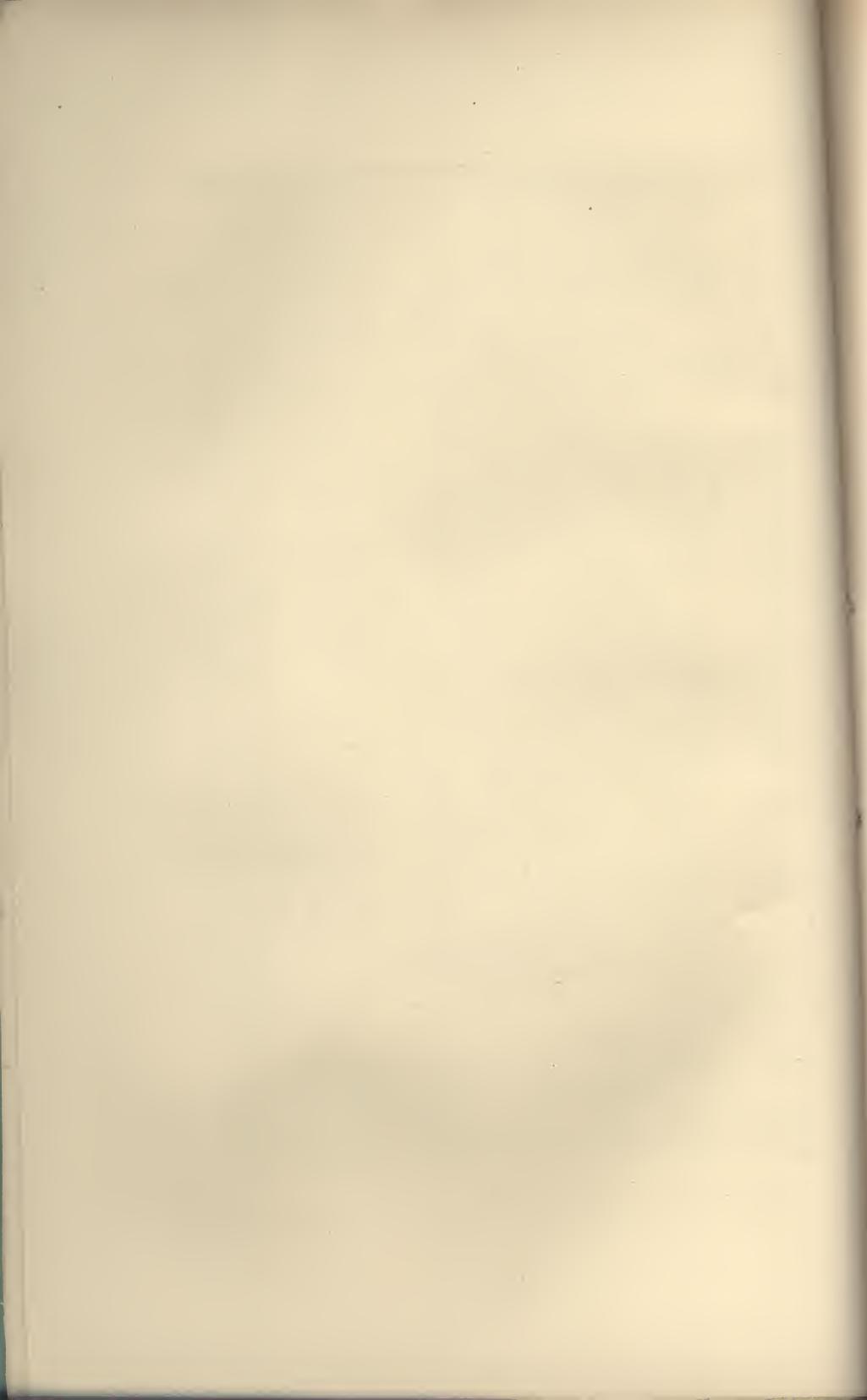




THE GARDEN ON THE ROOF.



FORMING THE DOMESTIC VIRTUES.



CHAPTER IV.

CUPID PROMPTED.

To use the cold language of the world, Mrs. Alfred Lammle rapidly improved the acquaintance of Miss Podsnap. To use the warm language of Mrs. Lammle, she and her sweet Georgiana soon became one: in heart, in mind, in sentiment, in soul.

Whenever Georgiana could escape from the thraldom of Podsnappery; could throw off the bedclothes of the custard-coloured phaëton, and get up; could shrink out of the range of her mother's rocking, and (so to speak) rescue her poor little frosty toes from being rocked over: she repaired to her friend, Mrs. Alfred Lammle. Mrs. Podsnap by no means objected. As a consciously "splendid woman," accustomed to overhear herself so denominated by elderly osteologists pursuing their studies in dinner society, Mrs. Podsnap could dispense with her daughter. Mr. Podsnap, for his part, on being informed where Georgiana was, swelled with patronage of the Lammles. That they, when unable to lay hold of him, should respectfully grasp at the hem of his mantle; that they, when they could not bask in the glory of him the sun, should take up with the pale reflected light of the watery young moon his daughter; appeared quite natural, becoming, and proper. It gave him a better opinion of the discretion of the Lammles than he had heretofore held, as showing that they appreciated the value of the connexion. So, Georgiana repairing to her friend, Mr. Podsnap went out to dinner, and to dinner, and yet to dinner, arm in arm with Mrs. Podsnap: settling his obstinate head in his cravat and shirt-collar, much as if he were performing on the Pandean pipes, in his own honor, the triumphal march, See the conquering Podsnap comes, Sound the trumpets, beat the drums!

It was a trait in Mr. Podsnap's character (and in one form or other it will be generally seen to pervade the depths and shallows of Podsnappery), that he could not endure a hint of disparagement of any friend or acquaintance of his. "How dare you?" he would seem to say, in such a case. "What do you mean? I have licensed this person. This person has taken out *my* certificate. Through this person you strike at me, Podsnap the Great. And it is not that I particularly care for the person's dignity, but that I do most particularly care for Podsnap's." Hence, if any one in his presence had presumed to doubt the responsibility of the Lammles, he would have been mightily huffed. Not that any one did, for Veneering, M.P., was always the authority for their being very rich, and perhaps believed it. As indeed he might, if he chose, for anything he knew of the matter.

Mr. and Mrs. Lammle's house in Sackville Street, Piccadilly, was but a temporary residence. It had done well enough, they informed their friends, for Mr. Lammle when a bachelor, but it would not do now. So, they were always looking at palatial residences in the best

situations, and always very nearly taking or buying one, but never quite concluding the bargain. Hereby they made for themselves a shining little reputation apart. People said, on seeing a vacant palatial residence, "The very thing for the Lammles!" and wrote to the Lammles about it, and the Lammles always went to look at it, but unfortunately it never exactly answered. In short, they suffered so many disappointments, that they began to think it would be necessary to build a palatial residence. And hereby they made another shining reputation; many persons of their acquaintance becoming by anticipation dissatisfied with their own houses, and envious of the non-existent Lammle structure.

The handsome fittings and furnishings of the house in Sackville Street were piled thick and high over the skeleton up-stairs, and if it ever whispered from under its load of upholstery, "Here I am in the closet!" it was to very few ears, and certainly never to Miss Podsnap's. What Miss Podsnap was particularly charmed with, next to the graces of her friend, was the happiness of her friend's married life. This was frequently their theme of conversation.

"I am sure," said Miss Podsnap, "Mr. Lammle is like a lover. At least I—I should think he was."

"Georgiana, darling!" said Mrs. Lammle, holding up a forefinger, "Take care!"

"Oh my goodness me!" exclaimed Miss Podsnap, reddening. "What have I said now?"

"Alfred, you know," hinted Mrs. Lammle, playfully shaking her head. "You were never to say Mr. Lammle any more, Georgiana."

"Oh! Alfred, then. I am glad it's no worse. I was afraid I had said something shocking. I am always saying something wrong to ma."

"To me, Georgiana dearest?"

"No, not to you; you are not ma. I wish you were."

Mrs. Lammle bestowed a sweet and loving smile upon her friend, which Miss Podsnap returned as she best could. They sat at lunch in Mrs. Lammle's own boudoir.

"And so, dearest Georgiana, Alfred is like your notion of a lover?"

"I don't say that, Sophronia," Georgiana replied, beginning to conceal her elbows. "I haven't any notion of a lover. The dreadful wretches that ma brings up at places to torment me, are not lovers. I only mean that Mr.—"

"Again, dearest Georgiana?"

"That Alfred—"

"Sounds much better, darling."

"—Loves you so. He always treats you with such delicate gallantry and attention. Now, don't he?"

"Truly, my dear," said Mrs. Lammle, with a rather singular expression crossing her face. "I believe that he loves me, fully as much as I love him."

"Oh, what happiness!" exclaimed Miss Podsnap.

"But do you know, my Georgiana," Mrs. Lammle resumed presently, "that there is something suspicious in your enthusiastic sympathy with Alfred's tenderness?"

"Good gracious no, I hope not!"

"Doesn't it rather suggest," said Mrs. Lammle archly, "that my Georgiana's little heart is——"

"Oh don't!" Miss Podsnap blushingly besought her. "Please don't! I assure you, Sophronia, that I only praise Alfred, because he is your husband and so fond of you."

Sophronia's glance was as if a rather new light broke in upon her. It shaded off into a cool smile, as she said, with her eyes upon her lunch, and her eyebrows raised:

"You are quite wrong, my love, in your guess at my meaning. What I insinuated was, that my Georgiana's little heart was growing conscious of a vacancy."

"No, no, no," said Georgiana. "I wouldn't have anybody say anything to me in that way for I don't know how many thousand pounds."

"In what way, my Georgiana?" inquired Mrs. Lammle, still smiling coolly with her eyes upon her lunch, and her eyebrows raised.

"*You know,*" returned poor little Miss Podsnap. "I think I should go out of my mind, Sophronia, with vexation and shyness and detestation, if anybody did. It's enough for me to see how loving you and your husband are. That's a different thing. I couldn't bear to have anything of that sort going on with myself. I should beg and pray to—to have the person taken away and trampled upon."

Ah! here was Alfred. Having stolen in unobserved, he playfully leaned on the back of Sophronia's chair, and, as Miss Podsnap saw him, put one of Sophronia's wandering locks to his lips, and waved a kiss from it towards Miss Podsnap.

"What is this about husbands and detestations?" inquired the captivating Alfred.

"Why, they say," returned his wife, "that listeners never hear any good of themselves; though you—but pray how long have you been here, sir?"

"This instant arrived, my own."

"Then I may go on—though if you had been here but a moment or two sooner, you would have heard your praises sounded by Georgiana."

"Only, if they were to be called praises at all which I really don't think they were," explained Miss Podsnap in a flutter, "for being so devoted to Sophronia."

"Sophronia!" murmured Alfred. "My life!" and kissed her hand. In return for which she kissed his watch-chain.

"But it was not I who was to be taken away and trampled upon, I hope?" said Alfred, drawing a seat between them.

"Ask Georgiana, my soul," replied his wife.

Alfred touchingly appealed to Georgiana.

"Oh, it was nobody," replied Miss Podsnap. "It was nonsense."

"But if you are determined to know, Mr. Inquisitive Pet, as I suppose you are," said the happy and fond Sophronia, smiling, "it was any one who should venture to aspire to Georgiana."

"Sophronia, my love," remonstrated Mr. Lammle, becoming graver, "you are not serious?"

"Alfred, my love," returned his wife, "I dare say Georgiana was not, but I am."

"Now this," said Mr. Lammle, "shows the accidental combinations that there are in things! Could you believe, my Ownest, that I came in here with the name of an aspirant to our Georgiana on my lips?"

"Of course I could believe, Alfred," said Mrs. Lammle, "anything that *you* told me."

"You dear one! And I anything that *you* told me."

How delightful those interchanges, and the looks accompanying them! Now, if the skeleton up-stairs had taken that opportunity, for instance, of calling out "Here I am, suffocating in the closet!"

"I give you my honor, my dear Sophronia——"

"And I know what that is, love," said she.

"You do, my darling—that I came into the room all but uttering young Fledgeby's name. Tell Georgiana, dearest, about young Fledgeby.

"Oh no, don't! Please don't!" cried Miss Podsnap, putting her fingers in her ears. "I'd rather not."

Mrs. Lammle laughed in her gayest manner, and, removing her Georgiana's unresisting hands, and playfully holding them in her own at arms' length, sometimes near together and sometimes wide apart, went on :

"You must know, you dearly beloved little goose, that once upon a time there was a certain person called young Fledgeby. And this young Fledgeby, who was of an excellent family and rich, was known to two other certain persons, dearly attached to one another and called Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Lammle. So this young Fledgeby, being one night at the play, there sees with Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Lammle, a certain heroine called——"

"No, don't say Georgiana Podsnap!" pleaded that young lady almost in tears. "Please don't. Oh do do say somebody else! Not Georgiana Podsnap. Oh don't, don't, don't!"

"No other," said Mrs. Lammle, laughing airily, and, full of affectionate blandishments, opening and closing Georgiana's arms like a pair of compasses, "than my little Georgiana Podsnap. So this young Fledgeby goes to that Alfred Lammle and says——"

"Oh ple-e-e-ease don't!" cried Georgiana, as if the supplication were being squeezed out of her by powerful compression. "I so hate him for saying it!"

"For saying what, my dear?" laughed Mrs. Lammle.

"Oh, I don't know what he said," cried Georgiana wildly, "but I hated him all the same for saying it."

"My dear," said Mrs. Lammle, always laughing in her most captivating way, "the poor young fellow only says that he is stricken all of a heap."

"Oh, what shall I ever do!" interposed Georgiana. "Oh my goodness what a Fool he must be!"

"—And implores to be asked to dinner, and to make a fourth at the play another time. And so he dines to-morrow and goes to the Opera with us. That's all. Except, my dear Georgiana—and what

will you think of this!—that he is infinitely shyer than you, and far more afraid of you than you ever were of any one in all your days!"

In perturbation of mind Miss Podsnap still fumed and plucked at her hands a little, but could not help laughing at the notion of anybody's being afraid of her. With that advantage, Sophronia flattered her and rallied her more successfully, and then the insinuating Alfred flattered her and rallied her, and promised that at any moment when she might require that service at his hands, he would take young Fledgeby out and trample on him. Thus it remained amicably understood that young Fledgeby was to come to admire, and that Georgiana was to come to be admired; and Georgiana with the entirely new sensation in her breast of having that prospect before her, and with many kisses from her dear Sophronia in present possession, preceded six feet one of discontented footman (an amount of the article that always came for her when she walked home) to her father's dwelling.

The happy pair being left together, Mrs. Lammle said to her husband :

" If I understand this girl, sir, your dangerous fascinations have produced some effect upon her. I mention the conquest in good time because I apprehend your scheme to be more important to you than your vanity."

There was a mirror on the wall before them, and her eyes just caught him smirking in it. She gave the reflected image a look of the deepest disdain, and the image received it in the glass. Next moment they quietly eyed each other, as if they, the principals, had had no part in that expressive transaction.

It may have been that Mrs. Lammle tried in some manner to excuse her conduct to herself by depreciating the poor little victim of whom she spoke with acrimonious contempt. It may have been too that in this she did not quite succeed, for it is very difficult to resist confidence, and she knew she had Georgiana's.

Nothing more was said between the happy pair. Perhaps conspirators who have once established an understanding, may not be overfond of repeating the terms and objects of their conspiracy. Next day came; came Georgiana; and came Fledgeby.

Georgiana had by this time seen a good deal of the house and its frequenters. As there was a certain handsome room with a billiard table in it—on the ground floor, eating out a backyard—which might have been Mr. Lammle's office, or library, but was called by neither name, but simply Mr. Lammle's room, so it would have been hard for stronger female heads than Georgiana's to determine whether its frequenters were men of pleasure or men of business. Between the room and the men there were strong points of general resemblance. Both were too gaudy, too slaney, too odorous of cigars, and too much given to horseflesh; the latter characteristic being exemplified in the room by its decorations, and in the men by their conversation. High-stepping horses seemed necessary to all Mr. Lammle's friends—as necessary as their transaction of business together in a gipsy way at untimely hours of the morning and evening, and in rushes and snatches.

There were friends who seemed to be always coming and going across the Channel, on errands about the Bourse, and Greek and Spanish and India and Mexican and par and premium and discount and three quarters and seven eighths. There were other friends who seemed to be always lolling and lounging in and out of the City, on questions of the Bourse, and Greek and Spanish and India and Mexican and par and premium and discount and three quarters and seven eighths. They were all feverish, boastful, and indefinitely loose; and they all ate and drank a great deal; and made bets in eating and drinking. They all spoke of sums of money, and only mentioned the sums and left the money to be understood; as "five and forty thousand Tom," or "Two hundred and twenty-two on every individual share in the lot Joe." They seemed to divide the world into two classes of people; people who were making enormous fortunes, and people who were being enormously ruined. They were always in a hurry, and yet seemed to have nothing tangible to do; except a few of them (these, mostly asthmatic and thick-lipped) who were for ever demonstrating to the rest, with gold pencil-cases which they could hardly hold because of the big rings on their forefingers, how money was to be made. Lastly, they all swore at their grooms, and the grooms were not quite as respectful or complete as other men's grooms; seeming somehow to fall short of the groom point as their masters fell short of the gentleman point.

Young Fledgeby was none of these. Young Fledgeby had a peachy cheek, or a cheek compounded of the peach and the red red red wall on which it grows, and was an awkward, sandy-haired, small-eyed youth, exceeding slim (his enemies would have said lanky), and prone to self-examination in the articles of whisker and moustache. While feeling for the whisker that he anxiously expected, Fledgeby underwent remarkable fluctuations of spirits, ranging along the whole scale from confidence to despair. There were times when he started, as exclaiming "By Jupiter here it is at last!" There were other times when, being equally depressed, he would be seen to shake his head, and give up hope. To see him at those periods leaning on a chimneypiece, like as on an urn containing the ashes of his ambition, with the cheek that would not sprout, upon the hand on which that cheek had forced conviction, was a distressing sight.

Not so was Fledgeby seen on this occasion. Arrayed in superb raiment, with his opera hat under his arm, he concluded his self-examination hopefully, awaited the arrival of Miss Podsnap, and talked small-talk with Mrs. Lammle. In facetious homage to the smallness of his talk, and the jerky nature of his manners, Fledgeby's familiars had agreed to confer upon him (behind his back) the honorary title of *Fascination Fledgeby*.

"Warm weather, Mrs. Lammle," said *Fascination Fledgeby*. Mrs. Lammle thought it scarcely as warm as it had been yesterday. "Perhaps not," said *Fascination Fledgeby*, with great quickness of repartee; "but I expect it will be devilish warm to-morrow."

He threw off another little scintillation. "Been out to-day, Mrs. Lammle?"

Mrs. Lammle answered, for a short drive.

"Some people," said Fascination Fledgeby, "are accustomed to take long drives; but it generally appears to me that if they make 'em too long, they overdo it."

Being in such feather, he might have surpassed himself in his next sally, had not Miss Podsnap been announced. Mrs. Lammle flew to embrace her darling little Georgy, and when the first transports were over, presented Mr. Fledgeby. Mr. Lammle came on the scene last, for he was always late, and so were the frequenters always late; all hands being bound to be made late, by private information about the Bourse, and Greek and Spanish and India and Mexican and par and premium and discount and three quarters and seven eightths.

A handsome little dinner was served immediately, and Mr. Lammle sat sparkling at his end of the table, with his servant behind his chair, and *his* ever-lingering doubts upon the subject of his wages behind himself. Mr. Lammle's utmost powers of sparkling were in requisition to-day, for Fascination Fledgeby and Georgiana not only struck each other speechless, but struck each other into astonishing attitudes; Georgiana, as she sat facing Fledgeby, making such efforts to conceal her elbows as were totally incompatible with the use of a knife and fork; and Fledgeby, as he sat facing Georgiana, avoiding her countenance by every possible device, and betraying the discomposure of his mind in feeling for his whiskers with his spoon, his wine glass, and his bread.

So, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Lammle had to prompt, and this is how they prompted.

"Georgiana," said Mr. Lammle, low and smiling, and sparkling all over, like a harlequin; "you are not in your usual spirits. Why are you not in your usual spirits, Georgiana?"

Georgiana faltered that she was much the same as she was in general; she was not aware of being different.

"Not aware of being different!" retorted Mr. Alfred Lammle. "You, my dear Georgiana! who are always so natural and unconstrained with us! who are such a relief from the crowd that are all alike! who are the embodiment of gentleness, simplicity, and reality!"

Miss Podsnap looked at the door, as if she entertained confused thoughts of taking refuge from these compliments in flight.

"Now, I will be judged," said Mr. Lammle, raising his voice a little, "by my friend Fledgeby."

"Oh don't!" Miss Podsnap faintly ejaculated: when Mrs. Lammle took the prompt-book.

"I beg your pardon, Alfred, my dear, but I cannot part with Mr. Fledgeby quite yet; you must wait for him a moment. Mr. Fledgeby and I are engaged in a personal discussion."

Fledgeby must have conducted it on his side with immense art, for no appearance of uttering one syllable had escaped him.

"A personal discussion, Sophronia, my love? What discussion? Fledgeby, I am jealous. What discussion, Fledgeby?"

"Shall I tell him, Mr. Fledgeby?" asked Mrs. Lammle.

Trying too look as if he knew anything about it, Fascination replied, "Yes, tell him."

"We were discussing then," said Mrs. Lammle, "if you *must* know, Alfred, whether Mr. Fledgeby was in his usual flow of spirits."

"Why, that is the very point, Sophronia, that Georgiana and I were discussing as to herself! What did Fledgeby say?"

"Oh, a likely thing, sir, that I am going to tell you everything, and be told nothing! What did Georgiana say?"

"Georgiana said she was doing her usual justice to herself to-day, and I said she was not."

"Precisely," exclaimed Mrs. Lammle, "what I said to Mr. Fledgeby."

Still, it wouldn't do. They would not look at one another. No, not even when the sparkling host proposed that the quartette should take an appropriately sparkling glass of wine. Georgiana looked from her wine glass at Mr. Lammle and at Mrs. Lammle; but mightn't, couldn't, shouldn't, wouldn't, look at Mr. Fledgeby. Fascination looked from his wine glass at Mrs. Lammle and at Mr. Lammle; but mightn't, couldn't, shouldn't, wouldn't, look at Georgiana.

More prompting was necessary. Cupid must be brought up to the mark. The manager had put him down in the bill for the part, and he must play it.

"Sophronia, my dear," said Mr. Lammle, "I don't like the colour of your dress."

"I appeal," said Mrs. Lammle, "to Mr. Fledgeby."

"And I," said Mr. Lammle, "to Georgiana."

"Georgy, my love," remarked Mrs. Lammle aside to her dear girl, "I rely upon you not to go over to the opposition. Now, Mr. Fledgeby."

Fascination wished to know if the colour were not called rose-colour? Yes, said Mr. Lammle; actually he knew everything; it was really rose-colour. Fascination took rose-colour to mean the colour of roses. (In this he was very warmly supported by Mr. and Mrs. Lammle.) Fascination had heard the term Queen of Flowers applied to the Rose. Similarly, it might be said that the dress was the Queen of Dresses. ("Very happy, Fledgeby!" from Mr. Lammle.) Notwithstanding, Fascination's opinion was that we all had our eyes—or at least a large majority of us—and that—and—and his further opinion was several ands, with nothing beyond them.

"Oh, Mr. Fledgeby," said Mrs. Lammle, "to desert me in that way! Oh, Mr. Fledgeby, to abandon my poor dear injured rose and declare for blue!"

"Victory, victory!" cried Mr. Lammle; "your dress is condemned, my dear."

"But what," said Mrs. Lammle, stealing her affectionate hand towards her dear girl's, "what does Georgy say?"

"She says," replied Mr. Lammle, interpreting for her, "that in her eyes you look well in any colour, Sophronia, and that if she had expected to be embarrassed by so pretty a compliment as she has received, she would have worn another colour herself. Though I tell her, in reply, that it would not have saved her, for whatever colour she had worn would have been Fledgeby's colour. But what does Fledgeby say?"

"He says," replied Mrs. Lammle, interpreting for him, and patting

the back of her dear girl's hand, as if it were Fledgeby who was patting it, "that it was no compliment, but a little natural act of homage that he couldn't resist. And," expressing more feeling as if it were more feeling on the part of Fledgeby, "he is right, he is right!"

Still, no not even now, would they look at one another. Seeming to gnash his sparkling teeth, studs, eyes, and buttons, all at once, Mr. Lammle secretly bent a dark frown on the two, expressive of an intense desire to bring them together by knocking their heads together.

"Have you heard this opera of to-night, Fledgeby?" he asked, stopping very short, to prevent himself from running on into "confound you."

"Why no, not exactly," said Fledgeby. "In fact I don't know a note of it."

"Neither do you know it, Georgy?" said Mrs. Lammle.

"N-no," replied Georgiana, faintly, under the sympathetic coincidence.

"Why, then," said Mrs. Lammle, charmed by the discovery which flowed from the premises, "you neither of you know it! How charming!"

Even the craven Fledgeby felt that the time was now come when he must strike a blow. He struck it by saying, partly to Mrs. Lammle and partly to the circumambient air, "I consider myself very fortunate in being reserved by—"

As he stopped dead, Mr. Lammle, making that gingerous bush of his whiskers to look out of, offered him the word "Destiny."

"No, I wasn't going to say that," said Fledgeby. "I was going to say Fate. I consider it very fortunate that Fate has written in the book of—in the book which is its own property—that I should go to that opera for the first time under the memorable circumstances of going with Miss Podsnap."

To which Georgiana replied, hooking her two little fingers in one another, and addressing the tablecloth, "Thank you, but I generally go with no one but you, Sophronia, and I like that very much."

Content perforce with this success for the time, Mr. Lammle let Miss Podsnap out of the room, as if he were opening her cage door, and Mrs. Lammle followed. Coffee being presently served up stairs, he kept a watch on Fledgeby until Miss Podsnap's cup was empty, and then directed him with his finger (as if that young gentleman were a slow Retriever) to go and fetch it. This feat he performed, not only without failure, but even with the original embellishment of informing Miss Podsnap that green tea was considered bad for the nerves. Though there Miss Podsnap unintentionally threw him out by faltering, "Oh, is it indeed? How does it act?" Which he was not prepared to elucidate.

The carriage announced, Mrs. Lammle said, "Don't mind me, Mr. Fledgeby, my skirts and cloak occupy both my hands, take Miss Podsnap." And he took her, and Mrs. Lammle went next, and Mr. Lammle went last, savagely following his little flock, like a drover.

But he was all sparkle and glitter in the box at the Opera, and

there he and his dear wife made a conversation between Fledgeby and Georgiana in the following ingenious and skilful manner. They sat in this order: Mrs. Lammle, Fascination Fledgeby, Georgiana, Mr. Lammle. Mrs. Lammle made leading remarks to Fledgeby, only requiring monosyllabic replies. Mr. Lammle did the like with Georgiana. At times Mrs. Lammle would lean forward to address Mr. Lammle to this purpose.

"Alfred, my dear, Mr. Fledgeby very justly says, apropos of the last scene, that true constancy would not require any such stimulant as the stage deems necessary." To which Mr. Lammle would reply, "Ay, Sophronia, my love, but as Georgiana has observed to me, the lady had no sufficient reason to know the state of the gentleman's affections." To which Mrs. Lammle would rejoin, "Very true, Alfred; but Mr. Fledgeby points out," this. To which Alfred would demur: "Undoubtedly, Sophronia, but Georgiana acutely remarks," that. Through this device the two young people conversed at great length and committed themselves to a variety of delicate sentiments, without having once opened their lips, save to say yes or no, and even that not to one another.

Fledgeby took his leave of Miss Podsnap at the carriage door, and the Lammles dropped her at her own home, and on the way Mrs. Lammle archly rallied her, in her fond and protecting manner, by saying at intervals, "Oh little Georgiana, little Georgiana!" Which was not much; but the tone added, 'You have enslaved your Fledgeby.'

And thus the Lammles got home at last, and the lady sat down moody and weary, looking at her dark lord engaged in a deed of violence with a bottle of soda-water as though he were wringing the neck of some unlucky creature and pouring its blood down his throat. As he wiped his dripping whiskers in an ogreish way, he met her eyes, and pausing, said, with no very gentle voice:

"Well?"

"Was such an absolute Booby necessary to the purpose?"

"I know what I am doing. He is no such dolt as you suppose."

"A genius, perhaps?"

"You sneer, perhaps; and you take a lofty air upon yourself, perhaps! But I tell you this:—when that young fellow's interest is concerned, he holds as tight as a horse-leech. When money is in question with that young fellow, he is a match for the Devil."

"Is he a match for you?"

"He is. Almost as good a one as you thought me for you. He has no quality of youth in him, but such as you have seen to-day. Touch him upon money, and you touch no booby then. He really is a dolt, I suppose, in other things; but it answers his one purpose very well."

"Has she money in her own right in any case?"

"Ay! she has money in her own right in any case. You have done so well to-day, Sophronia, that I answer the question, though you know I object to any such questions. You have done so well to-day, Sophronia, that you must be tired. Get to bed."

CHAPTER V.

MERCURY PROMPTING.

FLEDGEBY deserved Mr. Alfred Lammle's eulogium. He was the meanest cur existing, with a single pair of legs. And instinct (a word we all clearly understand) going largely on four legs, and reason always on two, meanness on four legs never attains the perfection of meanness on two.

The father of this young gentleman had been a money-lender, who had transacted professional business with the mother of this young gentleman, when he, the latter, was waiting in the vast dark ante-chambers of the present world to be born. The lady, a widow, being unable to pay the money-lender, married him; and in due course, Fledgeby was summoned out of the vast dark ante-chambers to come and be presented to the Registrar-General. Rather a curious speculation how Fledgeby would otherwise have disposed of his leisure until Doomsday.

Fledgeby's mother offended her family by marrying Fledgeby's father. It is one of the easiest achievements in life to offend your family when your family want to get rid of you. Fledgeby's mother's family had been very much offended with her for being poor, and broke with her for becoming comparatively rich. Fledgeby's mother's family was the Snigsworth family. She had even the high honour to be cousin to Lord Snigsworth—so many times removed that the noble Earl would have had no compunction in removing her one time more and dropping her clean outside the cousinly pale; but cousin for all that.

Among her pre-matrimonial transactions with Fledgeby's father, Fledgeby's mother had raised money of him at a great disadvantage on a certain reversionary interest. The reversion falling in soon after they were married, Fledgeby's father laid hold of the cash for his separate use and benefit. This led to subjective differences of opinion, not to say objective interchanges of boot-jacks, backgammon boards, and other such domestic missiles, between Fledgeby's father and Fledgeby's mother, and those led to Fledgeby's mother spending as much money as she could, and to Fledgeby's father doing all he couldn't to restrain her. Fledgeby's childhood had been, in consequence, a stormy one; but the winds and the waves had gone down in the grave, and Fledgeby flourished alone.

He lived in chambers in the Albany, did Fledgeby, and maintained a spruce appearance. But his youthful fire was all composed of sparks from the grindstone; and as the sparks flew off, went out, and never warmed anything, be sure that Fledgeby had his tools at the grindstone, and turned it with a wary eye.

Mr. Alfred Lammle came round to the Albany to breakfast with Fledgeby. Present on the table, one scanty pot of tea, one scanty loaf, two scanty pats of butter, two scanty rashers of bacon, two pitiful

eggs, and an abundance of handsome china bought a second-hand bargain.

“What did you think of Georgiana?” asked Mr. Lammle.

“Why, I’ll tell you,” said Fledgeby, very deliberately.

“Do, my boy.”

“You misunderstand me,” said Fledgeby. “I don’t mean I’ll tell you that. I mean I’ll tell you something else.”

“Tell me anything, old fellow!”

“Ah, but there you misunderstand me again,” said Fledgeby. “I mean I’ll tell you nothing.”

Mr. Lammle sparkled at him, but frowned at him too.

“Look here,” said Fledgeby. “You’re deep and you’re ready. Whether I am deep or not, never mind. I am not ready. But I can do one thing, Lammle, I can hold my tongue. And I intend always doing it.”

“You are a long-headed fellow, Fledgeby.”

“May be, or may not be. If I am a short-tongued fellow, it may amount to the same thing. Now, Lammle, I am never going to answer questions.”

“My dear fellow, it was the simplest question in the world.”

“Never mind. It seemed so, but things are not always what they seem. I saw a man examined as a witness in Westminster Hall. Questions put to him seemed the simplest in the world, but turned out to be anything rather than that, after he had answered ‘em. Very well. Then he should have held his tongue. If he had held his tongue he would have kept out of scrapes that he got into.”

“If I had held my tongue, you would never have seen the subject of my question,” remarked Lammle, darkening.

“Now, Lammle,” said Fascination Fledgeby, calmly feeling for his whisker, “it won’t do. I won’t be led on into a discussion. I can’t manage a discussion. But I can manage to hold my tongue.”

“Can?” Mr. Lammle fell back upon propitiation. “I should think you could! Why, when these fellows of our acquaintance drink and you drink with them, the more talkative they get, the more silent you get. The more they let out, the more you keep in.”

“I don’t object, Lammle,” returned Fledgeby, with an internal chuckle, “to being understood, though I object to being questioned. That certainly *is* the way I do it.”

“And when all the rest of us are discussing our ventures, none of us ever know what a single venture of yours is!”

“And none of you ever will from me, Lammle,” replied Fledgeby, with another internal chuckle; “that certainly *is* the way I do it.”

“Why of course it is, I know!” rejoined Lammle, with a flourish of frankness, and a laugh, and stretching out his hands as if to show the universe a remarkable man in Fledgeby. “If I hadn’t known it of my Fledgeby, should I have proposed our little compact of advantage, to my Fledgeby?”

“Ah!” remarked Fascination, shaking his head slyly. “But I am not to be got at in that way. I am not vain. That sort of vanity don’t pay, Lammle. No, no, no. Compliments only make me hold my tongue the more.”

Alfred Lammle pushed his plate away (no great sacrifice under the circumstances of there being so little in it), thrust his hands in his pockets, leaned back in his chair, and contemplated Fledgeby in silence. Then he slowly released his left hand from its pocket, and made that bush of his whiskers, still contemplating him in silence. Then he slowly broke silence, and slowly said: "What—the—Devil is this fellow about this morning?"

"Now, look here, Lammle," said Fascination Fledgeby, with the meanest of twinkles in his meanest of eyes: which were too near together, by the way: "look here, Lammle; I am very well aware that I didn't show to advantage last night, and that you and your wife—who, I consider, is a very clever woman and an agreeable woman—did. I am not calculated to show to advantage under that sort of circumstances. I know very well you two did show to advantage, and managed capitally. But don't you on that account come talking to me as if I was your doll and puppet, because I am not."

"And all this," cried Alfred, after studying with a look the meaness that was fain to have the meanest help, and yet was so mean as to turn upon it: "all this because of one simple natural question!"

"You should have waited till I thought proper to say something about it of myself. I don't like your coming over me with your Georgianas, as if you was her proprietor and mine too."

"Well, when you are in the gracious mind to say anything about it of yourself," retorted Lammle, "pray do."

"I have done it. I have said you managed capitally. You and your wife both. If you'll go on managing capitally, I'll go on doing my part. Only don't crow."

"I crow!" exclaimed Lammle, shrugging his shoulders.

"Or," pursued the other—"or take it in your head that people are your puppets because they don't come out to advantage at the particular moments when you do, with the assistance of a very clever and agreeable wife. All the rest keep on doing, and let Mrs. Lammle keep on doing. Now, I have held my tongue when I thought proper, and I have spoken when I thought proper, and there's an end of that. And now the question is," proceeded Fledgeby, with the greatest reluctance, "will you have another egg?"

"No, I won't," said Lammle, shortly.

"Perhaps you're right and will find yourself better without it," replied Fascination, in greatly improved spirits. "To ask you if you'll have another rasher would be unmeaning flattery, for it would make you thirsty all day. Will you have some more bread and butter?"

"No, I won't," repeated Lammle.

"Then I will," said Fascination. And it was not a mere retort for the sound's sake, but was a cheerful cogent consequence of the refusal; for if Lammle had applied himself again to the loaf, it would have been so heavily visited, in Fledgeby's opinion, as to demand abstinence from bread, on his part, for the remainder of that meal at least, if not for the whole of the next.

Whether this young gentleman (for he was but three-and-twenty) combined with the miserly vice of an old man, any of the open-

handed vices of a young one, was a moot point; so very honorably did he keep his own counsel. He was sensible of the value of appearances as an investment, and liked to dress well; but he drove a bargain for every moveable about him, from the coat on his back to the china on his breakfast-table; and every bargain by representing somebody's ruin or somebody's loss, acquired a peculiar charm for him. It was a part of his avarice to take, within narrow bounds, long odds at races; if he won, he drove harder bargains; if he lost, he half starved himself until next time. Why money should be so precious to an Ass too dull and mean to exchange it for any other satisfaction, is strange; but there is no animal so sure to get laden with it, as the Ass who sees nothing written on the face of the earth and sky but the three letters L. S. D.—not Luxury, Sensuality, Dissoluteness, which they often stand for, but the three dry letters. Your concentrated Fox is seldom comparable to your concentrated Ass in money-breeding.

Fascination Fledgeby feigned to be a young gentleman living on his means, but was known secretly to be a kind of outlaw in the bill-brokering line, and to put money out at high interest in various ways. His circle of familiar acquaintance, from Mr. Lammle round, all had a touch of the outlaw, as to their rovings in the merry greenwood of Jobbery Forest, lying on the outskirts of the Share-Market and the Stock Exchange.

"I suppose you, Lammle," said Fledgeby, eating his bread and butter, "always did go in for female society?"

"Always," replied Lammle, glooming considerably under his late treatment.

"Came natural to you, eh?" said Fledgeby.

"The sex were pleased to like me, sir," said Lammle sulkily, but with the air of a man who had not been able to help himself.

"Made a pretty good thing of marrying, didn't you?" asked Fledgeby.

The other smiled (an ugly smile), and tapped one tap upon his nose. *

"My late governor made a mess of it," said Fledgeby. "But Geor—— is the right name Georgina or Georgiana?"

"Georgiana."

"I was thinking yesterday, I didn't know there was such a name. I thought it must end in ina."

"Why?"

"Why, you play—if you can—the Concertina, you know," replied Fledgeby, meditating very slowly. "And you have—when you catch it—the Scarlatina. And you can come down from a balloon in a parach——no you can't though. Well, say Georgeute—I mean Georgiana."

"You were going to remark of Georgiana—?" Lammle moodily hinted, after waiting in vain.

"I was going to remark of Georgiana, sir," said Fledgeby, not at all pleased to be reminded of his having forgotten it, "that she don't seem to be violent. Don't seem to be of the pitching-in order."

"She has the gentleness of the dove, Mr. Fledgeby."

"Of course you'll say so," replied Fledgeby, sharpening, the moment his interest was touched by another. "But you know, the real look-out is this:—what I say, not what you say. I say—having my late governor and my late mother in my eye—that Georgiana don't seem to be of the pitching-in order."

The respected Mr. Lammle was a bully, by nature and by usual practice. Perceiving, as Fledgeby's affronts cumulated, that conciliation by no means answered the purpose here, he now directed a scowling look into Fledgeby's small eyes for the effect of the opposite treatment. Satisfied by what he saw there, he burst into a violent passion and struck his hand upon the table, making the china ring and dance.

"You are a very offensive fellow, sir," cried Mr. Lammle, rising. "You are a highly offensive scoundrel. What do you mean by this behaviour?"

"I say!" remonstrated Fledgeby. "Don't break out."

"You are a very offensive fellow sir," repeated Mr. Lammle. "You are a highly offensive scoundrel!"

"I say, you know!" urged Fledgeby, quailing.

"Why, you coarse and vulgar vagabond!" said Mr. Lammle, looking fiercely about him, "if your servant was here to give me six-pence of your money to get my boots cleaned afterwards—for you are not worth the expenditure—I'd kick you."

"No you wouldn't," pleaded Fledgeby. "I am sure you'd think better of it."

"I tell you what, Mr. Fledgeby," said Lammle advancing on him. "Since you presume to contradict me, I'll assert myself a little. Give me your nose!"

Fledgeby covered it with his hand instead, and said, retreating, "I beg you won't!"

"Give me your nose, sir," repeated Lammle.

Still covering that feature and backing, Mr. Fledgeby reiterated (apparently with a severe cold in his head), "I beg, I beg, you won't."

"And this fellow," exclaimed Lammle, stopping and making the most of his chest—"This fellow presumes on my having selected him out of all the young fellows I know, for an advantageous opportunity! This fellow presumes on my having in my desk round the corner, his dirty note of hand for a wretched sum payable on the occurrence of a certain event, which event can only be of my and my wife's bringing about! This fellow, Fledgeby, presumes to be impertinent to me, Lammle. Give me your nose sir!"

"No! Stop! I beg your pardon," said Fledgeby, with humility.

"What do you say, sir?" demanded Mr. Lammle, seeming too furious to understand.

"I beg your pardon," repeated Fledgeby.

"Repeat your words louder, sir. The just indignation of a gentleman has sent the blood boiling to my head. I don't hear you."

"I say," repeated Fledgeby, with laborious explanatory politeness, "I beg your pardon."

Mr. Lammle paused. "As a man of honour," said he, throwing himself into a chair, "I am disarmed."

Mr. Fledgeby also took a chair, though less demonstratively, and by slow approaches removed his hand from his nose. Some natural diffidence assailed him as to blowing it, so shortly after its having assumed a personal and delicate, not to say public, character; but he overcame his scruples by degrees, and modestly took that liberty under an implied protest.

"Lammle," he said sneakingly, when that was done, "I hope we are friends again?"

"Mr. Fledgeby," returned Lammle, "say no more."

"I must have gone too far in making myself disagreeable," said Fledgeby, "but I never intended it."

"Say no more, say no more!" Mr. Lammle repeated in a magnificent tone. "Give me your"—Fledgeby started—"hand."

They shook hands, and on Mr. Lammle's part, in particular, there ensued great geniality. For, he was quite as much of a dastard as the other, and had been in equal danger of falling into the second place for good, when he took heart just in time, to act upon the information conveyed to him by Fledgeby's eye.

The breakfast ended in a perfect understanding. Incessant machinations were to be kept at work by Mr. and Mrs. Lammle; love was to be made for Fledgeby, and conquest was to be insured to him; he on his part very humbly admitting his defects as to the softer social arts, and entreating to be backed to the utmost by his two able coadjutors.

Little recked Mr. Podsnap of the traps and toils besetting his Young Person. He regarded her as safe within the Temple of Podsnappery, biding the fulness of time when she, Georgiana, should take him, Fitz-Podsnap, who with all his worldly goods should her endow. It would call a blush into the cheek of his standard Young Person to have anything to do with such matters save to take as directed, and with worldly goods as per settlement to be endowed. Who giveth this woman to be married to this man? I, Podsnap. Perish the daring thought that any smaller creation should come between!

It was a public holiday, and Fledgeby did not recover his spirits or his usual temperature of nose until the afternoon. Walking into the City in the holiday afternoon, he walked against a living stream setting out of it; and thus, when he turned into the precincts of St. Mary Axe, he found a prevalent repose and quiet there. A yellow overhanging plaster-fronted house at which he stopped was quiet too. The blinds were all drawn down, and the inscription Pubsey and Co. seemed to doze in the counting-house window on the ground-floor giving on the sleepy street.

Fledgeby knocked and rang, and Fledgeby rang and knocked, but no one came. Fledgeby crossed the narrow street and looked up at the house-windows, but nobody looked down at Fledgeby. He got out of temper, crossed the narrow street again, and pulled the house-bell as if it were the house's nose, and he were taking a hint from his late experience. His ear at the keyhole seemed then, at last, to give him assurance that something stirred within. His eye at the key-hole seemed to confirm his ear, for he angrily pulled the house's

nose again, and pulled and pulled and continued to pull, until a human nose appeared in the dark doorway.

"Now you sir!" cried Fledgeby. "These are nice games!"

He addressed an old Jewish man in an ancient coat, long of skirt, and wide of pocket. A venerable man, bald and shining at the top of his head, and with long grey hair flowing down at its sides and mingling with his beard. A man who with a graceful Eastern action of homage bent his head, and stretched out his hands with the palms downward, as if to deprecate the wrath of a superior.

"What have you been up to?" said Fledgeby, storming at him.

"Generous Christian master," urged the Jewish man, "it being holiday, I looked for no one."

"Holiday be blowed!" said Fledgeby, entering. "What have you got to do with holidays? Shut the door."

With his former action the old man obeyed. In the entry hung his rusty large-brimmed low-crowned hat, as long out of date as his coat; in the corner near it stood his staff—no walking-stick but a veritable staff. Fledgeby turned into the counting-house, perched himself on a business stool, and cocked his hat. There were light boxes on shelves in the counting-house, and strings of mock beads hanging up. There were samples of cheap clocks, and samples of cheap vases of flowers. Foreign toys, all.

Perched on the stool with his hat cocked on his head and one of his legs dangling, the youth of Fledgeby hardly contrasted to advantage with the age of the Jewish man as he stood with his bare head bowed, and his eyes (which he only raised in speaking) on the ground. His clothing was worn down to the rusty hue of the hat in the entry, but though he looked shabby he did not look mean. Now, Fledgeby, though not shabby, did look mean.

"You have not told me what you were up to, you sir," said Fledgeby, scratching his head with the brim of his hat.

"Sir, I was breathing the air."

"In the cellar, that you didn't hear?"

"On the house-top."

"Upon my soul! That's a way of doing business."

"Sir," the old man represented with a grave and patient air, "there must be two parties to the transaction of business, and the holiday has left me alone."

"Ah! Can't be buyer and seller too. That's what the Jews say; ain't it?"

"At least we say truly, if we say so," answered the old man with a smile.

"Your people need speak the truth sometimes, for they lie enough," remarked Fascination Fledgeby.

"Sir, there is," returned the old man with quiet emphasis, "too much untruth among all denominations of men."

Rather dashed, Fascination Fledgeby took another scratch at his intellectual head with his hat, to gain time for rallying.

"For instance," he resumed, as though it were he who had spoken last, "who but you and I ever heard of a poor Jew?"

"The Jews," said the old man, raising his eyes from the ground

with his former smile. "They hear of poor Jews often, and are very good to them."

"Bother that!" returned Fledgeby. "You know what I mean. You'd persuade me if you could, that you are a poor Jew. I wish you'd confess how much you really did make out of my late governor. I should have a better opinion of you."

The old man only bent his head, and stretched out his hands as before.

"Don't go on posturing like a Deaf and Dumb School," said the ingenious Fledgeby, "but express yourself like a Christian—or as nearly as you can."

"I had had sickness and misfortunes, and was so poor," said the old man, "as hopelessly to owe the father, principal and interest. The son inheriting, was so merciful as to forgive me both, and place me here."

He made a little gesture as though he kissed the hem of an imaginary garment worn by the noble youth before him. It was humbly done, but picturesquely, and was not abasing to the doer.

"You won't say more, I see," said Fledgeby, looking at him as if he would like to try the effect of extracting a double-tooth or two, "and so it's of no use my putting it to you. But confess this, Riah; who believes you to be poor now?"

"No one," said the old man.

"There you're right," assented Fledgeby.

"No one," repeated the old man with a grave slow wave of his head. "All scout it as a fable. Were I to say 'This little fancy business is not mine,' with a lithe sweep of his easily-turning hand around him, to comprehend the various objects on the shelves; 'it is the little business of a Christian young gentleman who places me, his servant, in trust and charge here, and to whom I am accountable for every single bead,' they would laugh. When, in the larger money-business, I tell the borrowers——"

"I say, old chap!" interposed Fledgeby, "I hope you mind what you *do* tell 'em?"

"Sir, I tell them no more than I am about to repeat. When I tell them, 'I cannot promise this, I cannot answer for the other, I must see my principal, I have not the money, I am a poor man and it does not rest with me,' they are so unbelieving and so impatient, that they sometimes curse me in Jehovah's name."

"That's deuced good, that is!" said Fascination Fledgeby.

"And at other times they say, 'Can it never be done without these tricks, Mr. Riah? Come, come, Mr. Riah, we know the arts of your people—my people!—If the money is to be lent, fetch it, fetch it; if it is not to be lent, keep it and say so.' They never believe me."

"That's all right," said Fascination Fledgeby.

"They say, 'We know, Mr. Riah, we know. We have but to look at you, and we know.'"

"Oh, a good 'un are you for the post," thought Fledgeby, "and a good 'un was I to mark you out for it! I may be slow, but I am precious sure."

Not a syllable of this reflection shaped itself in any scrap of Mr. Fledgeby's breath, lest it should tend to put his servant's price up. But looking at the old man as he stood quiet with his head bowed and his eyes cast down, he felt that to relinquish an inch of his baldness, an inch of his grey hair, an inch of his coat-skirt, an inch of his hat-brim, an inch of his walking-staff, would be to relinquish hundreds of pounds.

"Look here, Riah," said Fledgeby, mollified by these self-approving considerations. "I want to go a little more into buying-up queer bills. Look out in that direction."

"Sir, it shall be done."

"Casting my eye over the accounts, I find that branch of business pays pretty fairly, and I am game for extending it. I like to know people's affairs likewise. So look out."

"Sir, I will, promptly."

"Put it about in the right quarters, that you'll buy queer bills by the lump—by the pound weight if that's all—supposing you see your way to a fair chance on looking over the parcel. And there's one thing more. Come to me with the books for periodical inspection as usual, at eight on Monday morning."

Riah drew some folding tablets from his breast and noted it down.

"That's all I wanted to say at the present time," continued Fledgeby in a grudging vein, as he got off the stool, "except that I wish you'd take the air where you can hear the bell, or the knocker, either one of the two or both. By-the-by how *do* you take the air at the top of the house? Do you stick your head out of a chimney-pot?"

"Sir, there are leads there, and I have made a little garden there."

"To bury your money in, you old dodger?"

"A thumbnail's space of garden would hold the treasure *I* bury, master," said Riah. "Twelve shillings a week, even when they are an old man's wages, bury themselves."

"I should like to know what you really are worth," returned Fledgeby, with whom his growing rich on that stipend and gratitude was a very convenient fiction. "But come! Let's have a look at your garden on the tiles, before I go!"

The old man took a step back, and hesitated.

"Truly, sir, I have company there."

"Have you, by George!" said Fledgeby; "I suppose you happen to know whose premises these are?"

"Sir, they are yours, and I am your servant in them."

"Oh! I thought you might have overlooked that," retorted Fledgeby, with his eyes on Riah's beard as he felt for his own; "having company on my premises, you know!"

"Come up and see the guests, sir. I hope for your admission that they can do no harm."

Passing him with a courteous reverence, specially unlike any action that Mr. Fledgeby could for his life have imparted to his own head and hands, the old man began to ascend the stairs. As he toiled on before, with his palm upon the stair-rail, and his long black skirt, a

very gaberdine, overhanging each successive step, he might have been the leader in some pilgrimage of devotional ascent to a prophet's tomb. Not troubled by any such weak imagining, Fascination Fledgeby merely speculated on the time of life at which his beard had begun, and thought once more what a good 'un he was for the part.

Some final wooden steps conducted them, stooping under a low penthouse roof, to the house-top. Riah stood still, and, turning to his master, pointed out his guests.

Lizzie Hexam and Jenny Wren. For whom, perhaps with some old instinct of his race, the gentle Jew had spread a carpet. Seated on it, against no more romantic object than a blackened chimney-stack over which some humble creeper had been trained, they both pored over one book; both with attentive faces; Jenny with the sharper; Lizzie with the more perplexed. Another little book or two were lying near, and a common basket of common fruit, and another basket full of strings of beads and tinsel scraps. A few boxes of humble flowers and evergreens completed the garden; and the encompassing wilderness of dowager old chimneys twirled their cowls and fluttered their smoke, rather as if they were bridling, and fanning themselves, and looking on in a state of airy surprise.

Taking her eyes off the book, to test her memory of something in it, Lizzie was the first to see herself observed. As she rose, Miss Wren likewise became conscious, and said, irreverently addressing the great chief of the premises: "Whoever you are, *I* can't get up, because my back's bad and my legs are queer."

"This is my master," said Riah, stepping forward.

("Don't look like anybody's master," observed Miss Wren to herself, with a hitch of her chin and eyes.)

"This, sir," pursued the old man, "is a little dressmaker for little people. Explain to the master, Jenny."

"Dolls; that's all," said Jenny, shortly. "Very difficult to fit too, because their figures are so uncertain. You never know where to expect their waists."

"Her friend," resumed the old man, motioning towards Lizzie; "and as industrious as virtuous. But that they both are. They are busy early and late, sir, early and late; and in bye-times, as on this holiday, they go to book-learning."

"Not much good to be got out of that," remarked Fledgeby.

"Depends upon the person!" quoth Miss Wren, snapping him up.

"I made acquaintance with my guests, sir," pursued the Jew, with an evident purpose of drawing out the dressmaker, "through their coming here to buy of our damage and waste for Miss Jenny's millinery. Our waste goes into the best of company, sir, on her rosy-cheeked little customers. They wear it in their hair, and on their ball-dresses, and even (so she tells me) are presented at Court with it."

"Ah!" said Fledgeby, on whose intelligence this doll-fancy made rather strong demands; "she's been buying that basketful to-day, I suppose?"

"I suppose she has," Miss Jenny interposed; "and paying for it too, most likely!"

"Let's have a look at it," said the suspicious chief. Riah handed it to him. "How much for this now?"

"Two precious silver shillings," said Miss Wren.

Riah confirmed her with two nods, as Fledgeby looked to him. A nod for each shilling.

"Well," said Fledgeby, poking into the contents of the basket with his forefinger, "the price is not so bad. You have got good measure, Miss What-is-it."

"Try Jenny," suggested that young lady with great calmness.

"You have got good measure, Miss Jenny; but the price is not so bad.—And you," said Fledgeby, turning to the other visitor, "do you buy anything here, miss?"

"No, sir."

"Nor sell anything neither, miss?"

"No, sir."

Looking askew at the questioner, Jenny stole her hand up to her friend's, and drew her friend down, so that she bent beside her on her knee.

"We are thankful to come here for rest, sir," said Jenny. "You see, you don't know what the rest of this place is to us; does he, Lizzie? It's the quiet, and the air."

"The quiet!" repeated Fledgeby, with a contemptuous turn of his head towards the City's roar. "And the air!" with a "Poof!" at the smoke.

"Ah!" said Jenny. "But it's so high. And you see the clouds rushing on above the narrow streets, not minding them, and you see the golden arrows pointing at the mountains in the sky from which the wind comes, and you feel as if you were dead."

The little creature looked above her, holding up her slight transparent hand.

"How do you feel when you are dead?" asked Fledgeby, much perplexed.

"Oh, so tranquil!" cried the little creature, smiling. "Oh, so peaceful and so thankful! And you hear the people who are alive, crying, and working, and calling to one another down in the close dark streets, and you seem to pity them so! And such a chain has fallen from you, and such a strange good sorrowful happiness comes upon you!"

Her eyes fell on the old man, who, with his hands folded, quietly looked on.

"Why it was only just now," said the little creature, pointing at him, "that I fancied I saw him come out of his grave! He toiled out at that low door so bent and worn, and then he took his breath and stood upright, and looked all round him at the sky, and the wind blew upon him, and his life down in the dark was over!—Till he was called 'back to life,' she added, looking round at Fledgeby with that lower look of sharpness. "Why did you call him back?"

"He was long enough coming, anyhow," grumbled Fledgeby.

"But you are not dead, you know," said Jenny Wren. "Get down to life!"

Mr. Fledgeby seemed to think it rather a good suggestion, and

with a nod turned round. As Riah followed to attend him down the stairs, the little creature called out to the Jew in a silvery tone, "Don't be long gone. Come back, and be dead!" And still as they went down they heard the little sweet voice, more and more faintly, half calling and half singing, "Come back and be dead, Come back and be dead!"

When they got down into the entry, Fledgeby, pausing under the shadow of the broad old hat, and mechanically poising the staff, said to the old man :

"That's a handsome girl, that one in her senses."

"And as good as handsome," answered Riah.

"At all events," observed Fledgeby, with a dry whistle, "I hope she ain't bad enough to put any chap up to the fastenings, and get the premises broken open. You look out. Keep your weather eye awake, and don't make any more acquaintances, however handsome. Of course you always keep my name to yourself?"

"Sir, assuredly I do."

"If they ask it, say it's Pubsey, or say it's Co, or say it's anything you like, but what it is."

His grateful servant—in whose race gratitude is deep, strong, and enduring—bowed his head, and actually did now put the hem of his coat to his lips: though so lightly that the wearer knew nothing of it.

Thus, Fascination Fledgeby went his way, exulting in the artful cleverness with which he had turned his thumb down on a Jew, and the old man went his different way up-stairs. As he mounted, the call or song began to sound in his ears again, and, looking above, he saw the face of the little creature looking down out of a Glory of her long bright radiant hair, and musically repeating to him, like a vision :

"Come up and be dead! Come up and be dead!"

CHAPTER VI.

A RIDDLE WITHOUT AN ANSWER.

AGAIN Mr. Mortimer Lightwood and Mr. Eugene Wrayburn sat together in the Temple. This evening, however, they were not together in the place of business of the eminent solicitor, but in another dismal set of chambers facing it on the same second-floor; on whose dungeon-like black outer-door appeared the legend :

PRIVATE.

MR. EUGENE WRAYBURN.

MR. MORTIMER LIGHTWOOD.

( Mr. Lightwood's Offices opposite.)

Appearances indicated that this establishment was a very recent institution. The white letters of the inscription were extremely white and extremely strong to the sense of smell, the complexion of

the tables and chairs was (like Lady Tippins's) a little too blooming to be believed in, and the carpets and floorecloth seemed to rush at the beholder's face in the unusual prominence of their patterns. But the Temple, accustomed to tone down both the still life and the human life that has much to do with it, would soon get the better of all that.

"Well!" said Eugene, on one side of the fire, "I feel tolerably comfortable. I hope the upholsterer may do the same."

"Why shouldn't he?" asked Lightwood, from the other side of the fire.

"To be sure," pursued Eugene, reflecting, "he is not in the secret of our pecuniary affairs, so perhaps he may be in an easy frame of mind."

"We shall pay him," said Mortimer.

"Shall we, really?" returned Eugene, indolently surprised. "You don't say so!"

"I mean to pay him, Eugene, for my part," said Mortimer, in a slightly injured tone.

"Ah! I mean to pay him too," retorted Eugene. "But then I mean so much that I—that I don't mean."

"Don't mean?"

"So much that I only mean and shall always only mean and nothing more, my dear Mortimer. It's the same thing."

His friend, lying back in his easy chair, watched him lying back in his easy chair, as he stretched out his legs on the hearth-rug, and said, with the amused look that Eugene Wrayburn could always awaken in him without seeming to try or care:

"Anyhow, your vagaries have increased the bill."

"Calls the domestic virtues vagaries!" exclaimed Eugene, raising his eyes to the ceiling.

"This very complete little kitchen of ours," said Mortimer, "in which nothing will ever be cooked—"

"My dear, dear Mortimer," returned his friend, lazily lifting his head a little to look at him, "how often have I pointed out to you that its moral influence is the important thing?"

"Its moral influence on this fellow!" exclaimed Lightwood, laughing.

"Do me the favour," said Eugene, getting out of his chair with much gravity, "to come and inspect that feature of our establishment which you rashly disparage." With that, taking up a candle, he conducted his chum into the fourth room of the set of chambers—a little narrow room—which was very completely and neatly fitted as a kitchen. "See!" said Eugene, "miniature flour-barrel, rolling-pin, spice-box, shelf of brown jars, chopping-board, coffee-mill, dresser elegantly furnished with crockery, saucepans and pans, roasting jack, a charming kettle, an armoury of dish-covers. The moral influence of these objects, in forming the domestic virtues, may have an immense influence upon me; not upon you, for you are a hopeless case, but upon me. In fact, I have an idea that I feel the domestic virtues already forming. Do me the favour to step into my bedroom. Secrétaire, you see, and abstruse set of solid mahogany pigeon-holes,

one for every letter of the alphabet. To what use do I devote them? I receive a bill—say from Jones. I docket it neatly at the secrétaire, JONES, and I put it into pigeon-hole J. It's the next thing to a receipt and is quite as satisfactory to *me*. And I very much wish, Mortimer," sitting on his bed, with the air of a philosopher lecturing a disciple, "that my example might induce *you* to cultivate habits of punctuality and method; and, by means of the moral influences with which I have surrounded you, to encourage the formation of the domestic virtues."

Mortimer laughed again, with his usual commentaries of "How can you be so ridiculous, Eugene!" and "What an absurd fellow you are!" but when his laugh was out, there was something serious, if not anxious, in his face. Despite that pernicious assumption of lassitude and indifference, which had become his second nature, he was strongly attached to his friend. He had founded himself upon Eugene when they were yet boys at school; and at this hour imitated him no less, admired him no less, loved him no less, than in those departed days.

"Eugene," said he, "if I could find you in earnest for a minute, I would try to say an earnest word to you."

"An earnest word?" repeated Eugene. "The moral influences are beginning to work. Say on."

"Well, I will," returned the other, "though you are not earnest yet."

"In this desire for earnestness," murmured Eugene, with the air of one who was meditating deeply, "I trace the happy influences of the little flour-barrel and the coffee-mill. Gratifying."

"Eugene," resumed Mortimer, disregarding the light interruption, and laying a hand upon Eugene's shoulder, as he, Mortimer, stood before him seated on his bed, "you are withholding something from me."

Eugene looked at him, but said nothing.

"All this past summer, you have been withholding something from me. Before we entered on our boating vacation, you were as bent upon it as I have seen you upon anything since we first rowed together. But you cared very little for it when it came, often found it a tie and a drag upon you, and were constantly away. Now it was well enough half-a-dozen times, a dozen times, twenty times, to say to me in your own odd manner, which I know so well and like so much, that your disappearances were precautions against our boring one another; but of course after a short while I began to know that they covered something. I don't ask what it is, as you have not told me; but the fact is so. Say, is it not?"

"I give you my word of honor, Mortimer," returned Eugene, after a serious pause of a few moments, "that I don't know."

"Don't know, Eugene?"

"Upon my soul, don't know. I know less about myself than about most people in the world, and I don't know."

"You have some design in your mind?"

"Have I? I don't think I have."

"At any rate, you have some subject of interest there which used not to be there?"

"I really can't say," replied Eugene, shaking his head blankly, after pausing again to reconsider. "At times I have thought yes; at other times I have thought no. Now, I have been inclined to pursue such a subject; now I have felt that it was absurd, and that it tired and embarrassed me. Absolutely, I can't say. Frankly and faithfully, I would if I could."

So replying, he clapped a hand, in his turn, on his friend's shoulder, as he rose from his seat upon the bed, and said:

"You must take your friend as he is. You know what I am, my dear Mortimer. You know how dreadfully susceptible I am to boredom. You know that when I became enough of a man to find myself an embodied conundrum, I bored myself to the last degree by trying to find out what I meant. You know that at length I gave it up, and declined to guess any more. Then how can I possibly give you the answer that I have not discovered? The old nursery form runs, 'Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree, p'raps you can't tell me what this may be?' My reply runs, 'No. Upon my life, I can't.'

So much of what was fantastically true to his own knowledge of this utterly careless Eugene, mingled with the answer, that Mortimer could not receive it as a mere evasion. Besides, it was given with an engaging air of openness, and of special exemption of the one friend he valued, from his reckless indifference.

"Come, dear boy!" said Eugene. "Let us try the effect of smoking. If it enlightens me at all on this question, I will impart unreservedly."

They returned to the room they had come from, and, finding it heated, opened a window. Having lighted their cigars, they leaned out of this window, smoking, and looking down at the moonlight, as it shone into the court below.

"No enlightenment," resumed Eugene, after certain minutes of silence. "I feel sincerely apologetic, my dear Mortimer, but nothing comes."

"If nothing comes," returned Mortimer, "nothing can come from it. So I shall hope that this may hold good throughout, and that there may be nothing on foot. Nothing injurious to you, Eugene, or—"

Eugene stayed him for a moment with his hand on his arm, while he took a piece of earth from an old flowerpot on the window-sill and dexterously shot it at a little point of light opposite; having done which to his satisfaction, he said, "Or?"

"Or injurious to any one else."

"How," said Eugene, taking another little piece of earth, and shooting it with great precision at the former mark, "how injurious to any one else?"

"I don't know."

"And," said Eugene, taking, as he said the word, another shot, "to whom else?"

"I don't know."

Checking himself with another piece of earth in his hand, Eugene looked at his friend inquiringly and a little suspiciously. There was no concealed or half-expressed meaning in his face.

"Two belated wanderers in the mazes of the law," said Eugene,

attracted by the sound of footsteps, and glancing down as he spoke, "stray into the court. They examine the door-posts of number one, seeking the name they want. Not finding it at number one, they come to number two. On the hat of wanderer number two, the shorter one, I drop this pellet. Hitting him on the hat, I smoke serenely, and become absorbed in contemplation of the sky."

Both the wanderers looked up towards the window; but, after interchanging a mutter or two, soon applied themselves to the door-posts below. There they seemed to discover what they wanted, for they disappeared from view by entering at the doorway. "When they emerge," said Eugene, "you shall see me bring them both down," and so prepared two pellets for the purpose.

He had not reckoned on their seeking his name, or Lightwood's. But either the one or the other would seem to be in question, for now there came a knock at the door. "I am on duty to-night," said Mortimer, "stay you where you are, Eugene." Requiring no persuasion, he stayed there, smoking quietly, and not at all curious to know who knocked, until Mortimer spoke to him from within the room, and touched him. Then, drawing in his head, he found the visitors to be young Charley Hexam and the schoolmaster; both standing facing him, and both recognized at a glance.

"You recollect this young fellow, Eugene?" said Mortimer.

"Let me look at him," returned Wrayburn, coolly. "Oh, yes, yes. I recollect him!"

He had not been about to repeat that former action of taking him by the chin, but the boy had suspected him of it, and had thrown up his arm with an angry start. Laughingly, Wrayburn looked to Lightwood for an explanation of this odd visit.

"He says he has something to say."

"Surely it must be to you, Mortimer."

"So I thought, but he says no. He says it is to you."

"Yes, I do say so," interposed the boy. "And I mean to say what I want to say, too, Mr. Eugene Wrayburn!"

Passing him with his eyes as if there were nothing where he stood, Eugene looked on to Bradley Headstone. With consummate indolence, he turned to Mortimer, inquiring: "And who may this other person be?"

"I am Charles Hexam's friend," said Bradley; "I am Charles Hexam's schoolmaster."

"My good sir, you should teach your pupils better manners," returned Eugene.

Composedly smoking, he leaned an elbow on the chimneypiece, at the side of the fire, and looked at the schoolmaster. It was a cruel look, in its cold disdain of him, as a creature of no worth. The schoolmaster looked at him, and that, too, was a cruel look, though of the different kind, that it had a raging jealousy and fiery wrath in it.

Very remarkably, neither Eugene Wrayburn nor Bradley Headstone looked at all at the boy. Through the ensuing dialogue, those two, no matter who spoke, or whom was addressed, looked at each other. There was some secret, sure perception between them, which set them against one another in all ways.

"In some high respects, Mr. Eugene Wrayburn," said Bradley, answering him with pale and quivering lips, "the natural feelings of my pupils are stronger than my teaching."

"In most respects, I dare say," replied Eugene, enjoying his cigar, "though whether high or low is of no importance. You have my name very correctly. Pray what is yours?"

"It cannot concern you much to know, but——"

"True," interposed Eugene, striking sharply and cutting him short at his mistake, "it does not concern me at all to know. I can say Schoolmaster, which is a most respectable title. You are right, Schoolmaster."

It was not the dullest part of this goad in its galling of Bradley Headstone, that he had made it himself in a moment of incautious anger. He tried to set his lips so as to prevent their quivering, but they quivered fast.

"Mr. Eugene Wrayburn," said the boy, "I want a word with you. I have wanted it so much, that we have looked out your address in the book, and we have been to your office, and we have come from your office here."

"You have given yourself much trouble, Schoolmaster," observed Eugene, blowing the feathery ash from his cigar. "I hope it may prove remunerative."

"And I am glad to speak," pursued the boy, "in presence of Mr. Lightwood, because it was through Mr. Lightwood that you ever saw my sister."

For a mere moment, Wrayburn turned his eyes aside from the schoolmaster to note the effect of the last word on Mortimer, who, standing on the opposite side of the fire, as soon as the word was spoken, turned his face towards the fire and looked down into it.

"Similarly, it was through Mr. Lightwood that you ever saw her again, for you were with him on the night when my father was found, and so I found you with her on the next day. Since then, you have seen my sister often. You have seen my sister oftener and oftener. And I want to know why?"

"Was this worth while, Schoolmaster?" murmured Eugene, with the air of a disinterested adviser. "So much trouble for nothing? You should know best, but I think not."

"I don't know, Mr. Wrayburn," answered Bradley, with his passion rising, "why you address me——"

"Don't you?" said Eugene. "Then I won't."

He said it so tauntingly in his perfect placidity, that the respectable right-hand clutching the respectable hair-guard of the respectable watch could have wound it round his throat and strangled him with it. Not another word did Eugene deem it worth while to utter, but stood leaning his head upon his hand, smoking, and looking imperturbably at the chafing Bradley Headstone with his clutching right-hand, until Bradley was wellnigh mad.

"Mr. Wrayburn," proceeded the boy, "we not only know this that I have charged upon you, but we know more. It has not yet come to my sister's knowledge that we have found it out, but we have. We had a plan, Mr. Headstone and I, for my sister's education, and

for its being advised and overlooked by Mr. Headstone, who is a much more competent authority, whatever you may pretend to think, as you smoke, than you could produce, if you tried. Then, what do we find? What do we find, Mr. Lightwood? Why, we find that my sister is already being taught, without our knowing it. We find that while my sister gives an unwilling and cold ear to our schemes for her advantage—I, her brother, and Mr. Headstone, the most competent authority, as his certificates would easily prove, that could be produced—she is wilfully and willingly profiting by other schemes. Ay, and taking pains, too, for I know what such pains are. And so does Mr. Headstone! Well! Somebody pays for this, is a thought that naturally occurs to us; who pays? We apply ourselves to find out, Mr. Lightwood, and we find that your friend, this Mr. Eugene Wrayburn, here, pays. Then I ask him what right has he to do it, and what does he mean by it, and how comes he to be taking such a liberty without my consent, when I am raising myself in the scale of society by my own exertions and Mr. Headstone's aid, and have no right to have any darkness cast upon my prospects, or any imputation upon my respectability, through my sister?"

The boyish weakness of this speech, combined with its great selfishness, made it a poor one indeed. And yet Bradley Headstone, used to the little audience of a school, and unused to the larger ways of men, showed a kind of exultation in it.

"Now I tell Mr. Eugene Wrayburn," pursued the boy, forced into the use of the third person by the hopelessness of addressing him in the first, "that I object to his having any acquaintance at all with my sister, and that I request him to drop it altogether. He is not to take it into his head that I am afraid of my sister's caring for him—"

(As the boy sneered, the Master sneered, and Eugene blew off the feathery ash again.)

—"But I object to it, and that's enough. I am more important to my sister than he thinks. As I raise myself, I intend to raise her; she knows that, and she has to look to me for her prospects. Now I understand all this very well, and so does Mr. Headstone. My sister is an excellent girl, but she has some romantic notions; not about such things as your Mr. Eugene Wrayburns, but about the death of my father and other matters of that sort. Mr. Wrayburn encourages those notions to make himself of importance, and so she thinks she ought be grateful to him, and perhaps even likes to be. Now I don't choose her to be grateful to him, or to be grateful to anybody but me, except Mr. Headstone. And I tell Mr. Wrayburn that if he don't take heed of what I say, it will be worse for her. Let him turn that over in his memory, and make sure of it. Worse for her!"

A pause ensued, in which the schoolmaster looked very awkward.

"May I suggest, Schoolmaster," said Eugene, removing his fast-waning cigar from his lips to glance at it, "that you can now take your pupil away."

"And Mr. Lightwood," added the boy, with a burning face, under the flaming aggravation of getting no sort of answer or attention,

"I hope you'll take notice of what I have said to your friend, and of what your friend has heard me say, word by word, whatever he pretends to the contrary. You are bound to take notice of it, Mr. Lightwood, for, as I have already mentioned, you first brought your friend into my sister's company, and but for you we never should have seen him. Lord knows none of us ever wanted him, any more than any of us will ever miss him. Now Mr. Headstone, as Mr. Eugene Wrayburn has been obliged to hear what I had to say, and couldn't help himself, and as I have said it out to the last word, we have done all we wanted to do, and may go."

"Go down-stairs, and leave me a moment, Hexam," he returned. The boy complying with an indignant look and as much noise as he could make, swung out of the room; and Lightwood went to the window, and leaned there, looking out.

"You think me of no more value than the dirt under your feet," said Bradley to Eugene, speaking in a carefully weighed and measured tone, or he could not have spoken at all.

"I assure you, Schoolmaster," replied Eugene, "I don't think about you."

"That's not true," returned the other; "you know better."

"That's coarse," Eugene retorted; "but you *don't* know better."

"Mr. Wrayburn, at least I know very well that it would be idle to set myself against you in insolent words or overbearing manners. That lad who has just gone out could put you to shame in half-a-dozen branches of knowledge in half an hour, but you can throw him aside like an inferior. You can do as much by me, I have no doubt, beforehand."

"Possibly," remarked Eugene.

"But I am more than a lad," said Bradley, with his clutching hand, "and I *WILL* be heard, sir."

"As a schoolmaster," said Eugene, "you are always being heard. That ought to content you."

"But it does not content me," replied the other, white with passion. "Do you suppose that a man, in forming himself for the duties I discharge, and in watching and repressing himself daily to discharge them well, dismisses a man's nature?"

"I suppose you," said Eugene, "judging from what I see as I look at you, to be rather too passionate for a good schoolmaster." As he spoke, he tossed away the end of his cigar.

"Passionate with you, sir, I admit I am. Passionate with you, sir, I respect myself for being. But I have not Devils for my pupils."

"For your Teachers, I should rather say," replied Eugene.

"Mr. Wrayburn."

"Schoolmaster."

"Sir, my name is Bradley Headstone."

"As you justly said, my good sir, your name cannot concern me. Now, what more?"

"This more. Oh, what a misfortune is mine," cried Bradley, breaking off to wipe the starting perspiration from his face as he shook from head to foot, "that I cannot so control myself as to appear a stronger creature than this, when a man who has not felt in

all his life what I have felt in a day can so command himself!" He said it in a very agony, and even followed it with an errant motion of his hands as if he could have torn himself.

Eugene Wrayburn looked on at him, as if he found him beginning to be rather an entertaining study.

"Mr. Wrayburn, I desire to say something to you on my own part."

"Come, come, Schoolmaster," returned Eugene, with a languid approach to impatience as the other again struggled with himself; "say what you have to say. And let me remind you that the door is standing open, and your young friend waiting for you on the stairs."

"When I accompanied that youth here, sir, I did so with the purpose of adding, as a man whom you should not be permitted to put aside, in case you put him aside as a boy, that his instinct is correct and right." Thus Bradley Headstone, with great effort and difficulty.

"Is that all?" asked Eugene.

"No, sir," said the other, flushed and fierce. "I strongly support him in his disapproval of your visits to his sister, and in his objection to your officiousness—and worse—in what you have taken upon yourself to do for her."

"Is that all?" asked Eugene.

"No, sir. I determined to tell you that you are not justified in these proceedings, and that they are injurious to his sister."

"Are you her schoolmaster as well as her brother's?—Or perhaps you would like to be?" said Eugene.

It was a stab that the blood followed, in its rush to Bradley Headstone's face, as swiftly as if it had been dealt with a dagger. "What do you mean by that?" was as much as he could utter.

"A natural ambition enough," said Eugene, coolly. "Far be it from me to say otherwise. The sister—who is something too much upon your lips, perhaps—is so very different from all the associations to which she has been used, and from all the low obscure people about her, that it is a very natural ambition."

"Do you throw my obscurity in my teeth, Mr. Wrayburn?"

"That can hardly be, for I know nothing concerning it, Schoolmaster, and seek to know nothing."

"You reproach me with my origin," said Bradley Headstone; "you cast insinuations at my bringing-up. But I tell you, sir, I have worked my way onward, out of both and in spite of both, and have a right to be considered a better man than you, with better reasons for being proud."

"How I can reproach you with what is not within my knowledge, or how I can cast stones that were never in my hand, is a problem for the ingenuity of a schoolmaster to prove," returned Eugene. "Is that all?"

"No, sir. If you suppose that boy——"

"Who really will be tired of waiting," said Eugene, politely.

"If you suppose that boy to be friendless, Mr. Wrayburn, you deceive yourself. I am his friend, and you shall find me so."

"And you will find *him* on the stairs," remarked Eugene.

" You may have promised yourself, sir, that you could do what you chose here, because you had to deal with a mere boy, inexperienced, friendless, and unassisted. But I give you warning that this mean calculation is wrong. You have to do with a man also. You have to do with me. I will support him, and, if need be, require reparation for him. My hand and heart are in this cause, and are open to him."

" And—quite a coincidence—the door is open," remarked Eugene.

" I scorn your shifty evasions, and I scorn you," said the school-master. " In the meanness of your nature you revile me with the meanness of my birth. I hold you in contempt for it. But if you don't profit by this visit, and act accordingly, you will find me as bitterly in earnest against you as I could be if I deemed you worth a second thought on my own account."

With a consciously bad grace and stiff manner, as Wrayburn looked so easily and calmly on, he went out with these words, and the heavy door closed like a furnace-door upon his red and white heats of rage.

" A curious monomaniac," said Eugene. " The man seems to believe that everybody was acquainted with his mother!"

Mortimer Lightwood being still at the window, to which he had in delicacy withdrawn, Eugene called to him, and he fell to slowly pacing the room.

" My dear fellow," said Eugene, as he lighted another cigar, " I fear my unexpected visitors have been troublesome. If as a set-off (excuse the legal phrase from a barrister-at-law) you would like to ask Tippins to tea, I pledge myself to make love to her."

" Eugene, Eugene, Eugene," replied Mortimer, still pacing the room, " I am sorry for this. And to think that I have been so blind!"

" How blind, dear boy?" inquired his unmoved friend.

" What were your words that night at the river-side public-house?" said Lightwood, stopping. " What was it that you asked me? Did I feel like a dark combination of traitor and pickpocket when I thought of that girl?"

" I seem to remember the expression," said Eugene.

" How do *you* feel when you think of her just now?"

His friend made no direct reply, but observed, after a few whiffs of his cigar, " Don't mistake the situation. There is no better girl in all this London than Lizzie Hexam. There is no better among my people at home; no better among your people."

" Granted. What follows?"

" There," said Eugene, looking after him dubiously as he paced away to the other end of the room, " you put me again upon guessing the riddle that I have given up."

" Eugene, do you design to capture and desert this girl?"

" My dear fellow, no."

" Do you design to marry her?"

" My dear fellow, no."

" Do you design to pursue her?"

" My dear fellow, I don't design anything. I have no design

whatever. I am incapable of designs. If I conceived a design, I should speedily abandon it, exhausted by the operation."

"Oh Eugene, Eugene!"

"My dear Mortimer, not that tone of melancholy reproach, I entreat. What can I do more than tell you all I know, and acknowledge my ignorance of all I don't know! How does that little old song go, which, under pretence of being cheerful, is by far the most lugubrious I ever heard in my life?"

' Away with melancholy,
Nor doleful changes ring
On life and human folly,
But merrily merrily sing
 Fal la la!'

Don't let us sing Fal la, my dear Mortimer (which is comparatively unmeaning), but let us sing that we give up guessing the riddle altogether."

"Are you in communication with this girl, Eugene, and is what these people say true?"

"I concede both admissions to my honorable and learned friend."

"Then what is to come of it? What are you doing? Where are you going?"

"My dear Mortimer, one would think the schoolmaster had left behind him a catechizing infection. You are ruffled by the want of another cigar. Take one of these, I entreat. Light it at mine, which is in perfect order. So! Now do me the justice to observe that I am doing all I can towards self-improvement, and that you have a light thrown on those household implements which, when you only saw them as in a glass darkly, you were hastily—I must say hastily—inclined to depreciate. Sensible of my deficiencies, I have surrounded myself with moral influences expressly meant to promote the formation of the domestic virtues. To those influences, and to the improving society of my friend from boyhood, commend me with your best wishes."

"Ah, Eugene!" said Lightwood, affectionately, now standing near him, so that they both stood in one little cloud of smoke; "I would that you answered my three questions! What is to come of it? What are you doing? Where are you going?"

"And my dear Mortimer," returned Eugene, lightly fanning away the smoke with his hand for the better exposition of his frankness of face and manner, "believe me, I would answer them instantly if I could. But to enable me to do so, I must first have found out the troublesome conundrum long abandoned. Here it is. Eugene Wrayburn." Tapping his forehead and breast. "Riddle-me, riddle-me-ree, perhaps you can't tell me what this may be?—No, upon my life I can't. I give it up!"

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[For further Select Medical Opinions see other side.]

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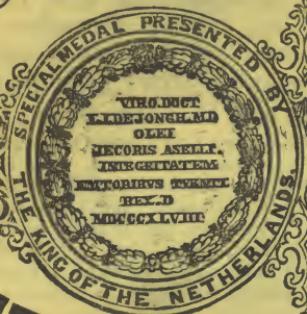
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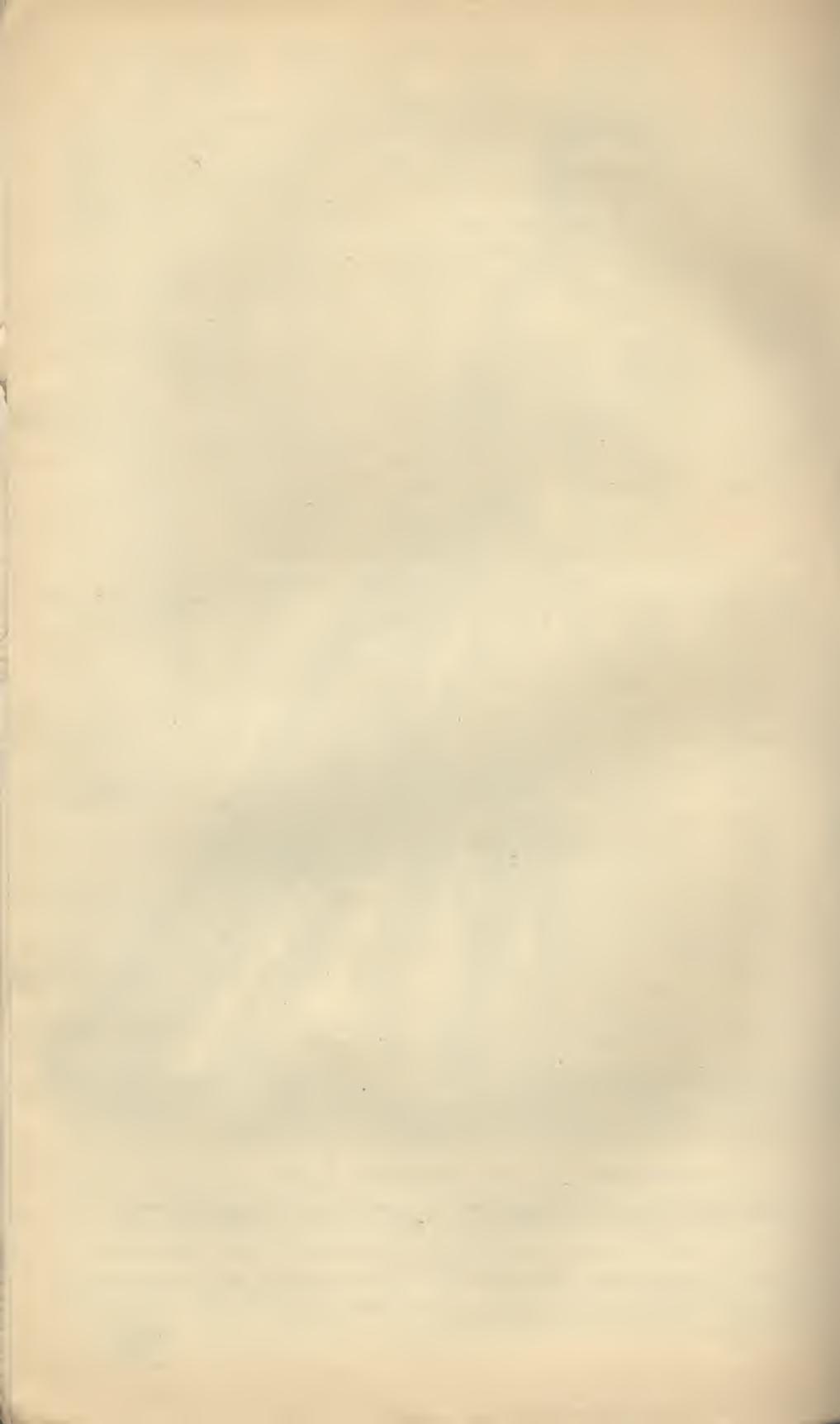


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1825	1000 0 0	941 4 3	54 3 2	8 2 6	2003 9 11
1835	1000 0 0	664 5 8	33 16 5	5 1 6	1703 3 7
1845	1000 0 0	378 15 11	15 9 9	2 6 6	1396 12 2
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A's Policy, 1815	£2543 19 1	£1293 15 0	£1250 4 1
B's Policy, 1825	2003 9 11	1035 0 0	968 9 11
C's Policy, 1835	1703 3 7	776 5 0	926 18 7
D's Policy, 1845	1396 12 2	517 10 0	879 2 2
E's Policy, 1855	1174 5 6	258 15 0	915 10 6
F's Policy, 1864	1000 0 0	25 17 6	974 2 6

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25	2 6 6	40	3 6 3	50	4 9 2

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